1

INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING IN TEACHING OF ENGLISH

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**EXPERT COMMITTEE**

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<tr>
<td>Prof. I. K. Bansal (Chairperson)</td>
<td>Former Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department of Elementary Education</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>NCERT, New Delhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Former Vice-Chancellor</td>
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<td>School of Sciences, IGNOU, New Delhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. Aejaz Masih</td>
<td>Faculty of Education, Jamia Millia Islamia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Delhi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prof. Pratyusha Kumar Mandal</td>
<td>DESSH, NCERT, New Delhi</td>
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**PROFESSORS SITTING EX OFFICE**

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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Prof. Anju Sehgal Gupta</td>
<td>School of Humanities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IGNOU, New Delhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. N.K. Dsash (Director)</td>
<td>School of Education</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Prof. M.C. Sharma</td>
<td>Programme Coordinator-B.Ed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Gaurav Singh</td>
<td>Programme Coordinator-B.Ed.</td>
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<td>Dr. Elizabeth Kuruvilla</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Dr. Niradhar Dey</td>
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<td>Dr. M.V. Lakshmi Reddy</td>
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Course Coordinator: Ms. Poonam Bhushan, Associate Professor, SOE, IGNOU, New Delhi

**COURSE TEAM**

**Course Contribution**

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<tr>
<td>Mr. Rama Meganathan</td>
<td>Mr. Rama Meganathan, NCER, New Delhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. Jacob Tharu</td>
<td>Formerly with EFLU Hydrabad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. Anju S. Gupta</td>
<td>School of Humanities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Meera Balchandran</td>
<td>IGNOU, New Delhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Principal, Ramjas School</td>
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<td>Director, Education, Quality Foundation</td>
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<td>of India, Delhi and</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Eisha Kannadi, Associate Professor</td>
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<td>SOE, IGNOU, New Delhi</td>
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**Content and Language Editing**

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<tr>
<td>Prof. Anju Sehgal Gupta</td>
<td>School of Humanities</td>
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**Format Editing and Proof Reading**

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<tr>
<td>Ms. Poonam Bhushan</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
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**MATERIAL PRODUCTION**

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<tr>
<td>Prof. Saroj Pandey</td>
<td>Director, School of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IGNOU, New Delhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. S.S. Venkatachalam</td>
<td>A.R. (Publication)</td>
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<tr>
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April, 2017
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ISBN-
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Further information on Indira Gandhi National Open University courses may be obtained from the University's office at Maidan Garhi, New Delhi-110 068.
Printed and published on behalf of the Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi by Director, School of Education, IGNOU.
Lasertypesetted at Graphic Printers, Mayur Vihar, Phase-I, Delhi-91.
Printed at:
Introduction to the Course

This course on the ‘Teaching of English’ is basically an attempt to enhance the teachers’ understanding of learners, the learning process, the nature and structure of the English as a second language. The Course also focuses on the different theories about the nature of the language and how languages are learnt, implying different ways of teaching language. It is expected that, after going through this course, the teachers will critically reflect on their practice and teach more effectively the four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. After going through this Course, the teachers are expected to:

i) gain insights about the language learner, not only as a cognitive entity, but as a social being functioning in a multilingual environment;

ii) understand the nature of language as a dynamic entity, subject to variation and change;

iii) critically reflect over their classroom experience and innovation teaching strategies so that they may more effectively teach the four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing; and

iv) upgrade themselves in the new issues related to the learners, the learning process, classroom management, methodology of teaching and evaluation.

The first Block starts with an introduction on the natural functions of language and focuses on the role of English in the context. It examines the status of English in the formal educational setup and outside the classroom. The crucial factor in the language learning process is, of course, the learner, and specifically the learner factors that affect second language acquisition. These factors include, aptitude for language, attitude, motivation, age, sex, nature of previous experience of learning and so on. The third Unit discusses the major methodological trends in the history of English language teaching. The first Block while keeping the learner centre-stage, discusses the role of the teacher in transmitting effectively interaction leading to language acquisition and the need to be a reflective teacher to improve one’s practice as a teacher.

The second Block deals with the need and development of listening and speaking skills. There is an attempt to understand the nature and need of listening and speaking activities for the learners in real life contexts. There is a discussion on the listening process, types of listening, and on conducting listening tasks using authentic materials. The Block also discusses speaking skills and strategies that can be used to develop speaking skills. The focus is on distinguishing between interactive and non interactive use of language and understanding the difference between speaking and other skills. It is suggested that the activities be planned with the knowledge of the demands they place on the learners. There is a discussion on assessment and evaluation in these two areas while specifying the conditions for tests and the criteria for assessment.

The third Block ‘Reading Comprehension’ focuses on understanding the difference between reading and reading comprehension and attempts to understand the nature of the reading comprehension as a cognitive process, the interface between the reader and the text, types of reading and classroom strategies to develop effective reading skills. The Block also discusses assessment strategies to assess reading skills.
The last Block, namely, ‘Teaching Writing and Grammar’ focuses on two issues, i.e. ‘writing’ and ‘grammar’ and the role of the teacher in facilitating the transaction of this in the classroom. The Unit views writing as a process comprising of stages that are interrelated and not as an end product. Both these aspects, namely, writing as a process and as an end product envisages different roles for the teacher. In the former case, she is expected to give a constructive feedback during the process and in the latter, awards marks/grades so that the students know where they stand and what they have achieved. With regard to teaching grammar, it is emphasized that the approach is rather covert and not a set of mechanical rules. There are different games and activities which are suggested to make the experience enjoyable for students. Tools for Assessing writing and grammar have also been discussed in the Block.
Block Introduction

To intervene meaningfully in the process of language learning, we need to understand the nature of language and language acquisition. The first Block, ‘Instructional Planning in Teaching of English’ attempts to take into consideration issues directly related to teaching methodology in English language teaching while focusing on the nature of the learner and learner factors.

The first Unit examines the crucial link between the needs/motivations of learning English in our country and its influence on the objectives and nature of English language teaching in India. It also aims to highlight the role of the teacher in learning situations where access to the language is very limited.

The second Unit titled ‘Who are the learners of Language’ does not present a profile or data of learners in terms of boys/girls, urban/rural, monolingual/bilingual characteristics but lends an insight into exploring the capabilities and resources that learners in general have and how these can be used meaningfully in the classroom.

The third Unit ‘Approaches, Methods and Techniques in English Language Teaching’ takes off from the discussion in the first two Units, namely, the nature of language and how languages are learnt. Logically, a discussion on different ways of teaching language (the method) is in place here. The presumption is that a teacher who has a rich repertoire of techniques to teach different skills and sub-skills is more likely to succeed in this objective than the one who has limited number of techniques at command.

The fourth Unit, ‘Daily Lesson Plans: for Classroom Transaction’ focuses on the lesson plan as a reflection of the thinking and decisions of a teacher for effective teaching. The Unit emphasizes the need for planning lessons while being realistic about the possibility of not sticking rigidly to the plan in the classroom.

The fifth Unit on ‘Monitoring Instruction’ discusses how the practice of monitoring in the long run helps to make the teacher a reflective practitioner-one who is not only doing a technical job but also learning from experience. The informal practice of monitoring teaching can be aligned to the actual learning situation, by judging the lesson from situation to situation. Monitoring has to be an ongoing activity, the teacher should be aware of aspects of instruction that can be monitored and the tools that can be used for monitoring.
UNIT 1  NATURE, NEED AND OBJECTIVES OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Structure
1.0 Objectives
1.1 Introduction
1.2 English Learning Teaching Situation in India
   1.2.1 Diversity and Disparity
   1.2.2 Multilingualism and Language Education
1.3 The Status and Nature of English Language Teaching in India
   1.3.1 The Status of English within the Formal Instructional System
1.4 The Needs and Objectives of Teaching English
   1.4.1 Objectives of Teaching English
   1.4.2 Why do we Teaching English?
1.5 Let Us Sum Up
1.6 Key Words
1.7 Answers
1.8 Suggested Readings

1.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit will enable you to:

- assess the status of English language both within the formal educational set up (in your State/city) as well as outside the classroom;
- understand the interrelationship between the status of English within the classroom and the status of English outside the classroom; and
- get some insight into the role of the teacher in teaching English in situations where access to the language is very limited.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The nature of teaching-learning of any language in the world will always remain deeply connected to the needs and motivations of the learners who acquire that language. For example:

i) A Bengali child in Hyderabad is likely to pick up Telegu because that is the language spoken by his peers. The child’s need to communicate with his peers motivates him to learn the language.

ii) A child who has Hindi as his mother tongue (MT) may learn English because it is a compulsory part of her school curriculum.

iii) A street vendor, selling handicrafts on the pavement may pick up enough English to be able to sell his wares to foreign tourists.
The last two decades have witnessed an increase in demand of the English language for upward mobility.

In this Unit, we will attempt to examine the link between the needs and motivations of learning English in our country and its influence on the objectives and nature of English language teaching in India in formal settings such as schools, colleges and other English language teaching institutes.

Language is a means of discovery: discovery of the self and of the world. The human urge to share with others or express one’s thoughts and desires drives the learning of a language.

Talking about the ‘functions’ of language, F. Newmeyer (1983) says:

“Obviously, communication is a function of language – perhaps, according to some plausible but still in devised scale, the most important function. But communication does not appear to be the only function of language. Language is used for thought, for problem solving, for play, for dreaming, for displays of group solidarity, for deception, for certain specialised literary modes such as represented speech ..., and possibly to fulfill an instinctive need for symbolic behaviour...”

As language teachers, it is important for us to remember the natural functions of language. In order to let this functionality remain intact in formal language learning situations, opportunities to ‘communicate’ or ‘use’ the language must form the core of any language learning programme. It is, thus, that teaching of English in India is becoming increasingly ‘skill’ based in its attempts to make the learner acquire the four language skills (speaking, reading, listening and writing) to enable the learner to become an effective and autonomous communicator.

1.2 ENGLISH LEARNING TEACHING SITUATION IN INDIA

1.2.1 Diversity and Disparity

English learning education is marked by diversity and disparity in terms of provision and resources for teaching of English as a second language and as well as medium of instruction in school education. There are varieties of school systems that exist in the country today – the State runs schools where the medium of instruction is the State language or the vernacular, the English medium schools, the private schools where the medium of instruction is often English, the Kendriya Vidyalayas where the children of Central Government employees study and a special category of schools known as the Navodaya Vidyalayas set up as a follow up to the National Policy of Education (1986) for nurturing rural talents. These last two categories of schools follow a mixed medium of instruction in quite a number of their schools. Children learn Science and Mathematics in English medium and Social Sciences through Indian languages/regional medium. There are also state-run schools where one section in each class is English medium. This presents a ‘huge linguistic gap’ for students who have attended vernacular medium schools (Anderson, 2012). Here learning English often becomes a burden for students as they are forced to learn the language on their own (Sheorey, 2006: 70). In all the categories of schools and the systems of school education, English is a second language, irrespective of its standard of teaching and availability of English in the ambience and exposure and access to the language.

The English language teaching situation within and across the school systems present
a mixed picture in terms of teacher proficiency (TP) and the exposure of pupils to
the language in and outside school, i.e. the availability of English in the environment
of language acquisition (EE) (NCERT 2005). Kurien (1997) identifies four types of
schools as given below:

a. $\uparrow \uparrow \text{TP}, \uparrow \uparrow \text{EE}$ (e.g. English-medium private / government-aided elite schools):
   Proficient teachers; varying degrees of English in the environment, including as
   a home or first language.

b. $\uparrow \text{TP}, \uparrow \text{EE}$ (e.g. New English-medium private schools, many of which use both
   English and other Indian languages): Teachers with limited proficiency; children
   with little or no background in English; parents aspire upward mobility for their
   children through English.

c. $\uparrow \text{TP}, \uparrow \text{EE}$ (e.g. Government-aided regional-medium schools): Schools with a
   tradition of English education along with regional languages, established by
   educational societies, with children from a variety of background.

d. $\uparrow \uparrow \text{TP}, \uparrow \uparrow \text{EE}$ (e.g. Government regional-medium schools run by district and
   municipal education authorities): They enroll the largest number of elementary
   school children in rural India. They are also the only choice for the urban poor
   (who, however, have some options of access to English in the environment).
   Their teachers may be the least proficient in English of these four types of

The difference in the teaching-learning situation, learners’ exposure to the language
outside the schools and parental support further divides each category of student.
The teaching situation decides where a school stands. Most rural schools in India
today fall under the fourth category where we have children with almost no exposure
to the language, teachers’ language proficiency is in question and the parents who
cannot support their wards in learning the language.

1.2.2 Multilingualism and Language Education

India’s linguistics diversity is both a challenge and an opportunity in schooling. It is a
challenge as the language-in-education policy could not, accommodate (all) the
languages of the children in the curriculum and is a merit and opportunity in terms of
availability of languages in a typical Indian classroom where employing multilingualism
as a strategy for teaching-learning of languages as well as the ‘content’ subject is
possible and necessary. The language-in-education policy attempts to accommodate
at least three languages within ten years of schooling. However, many tribal and
minor languages are yet to find a place in the school curriculum.

Activity 1

1) Visit at least three schools in your neighbourhood and find the difference in the
   English language proficiency of learners and teachers, languages known/spoken
   by learners, and languages used inside and outside the classroom in the school.

2) Try and recall how you learnt English language inside school and outside school.
   What were the opportunities for learning of English in your childhood and school
days? Write your language learning autobiography giving instances which
   supported or hampered language learning.

Discussion

The diverse nature of schooling discussed above is also manifested in the curricular
practices which includes methodology of teaching, teaching-learning materials and
assessment. A national or state level curriculum may advocate sound pedagogical practices based on contemporary belief and research evidences but this does not necessarily mean the teacher and the school is equipped with the practice of the same. This leads to what Michael Swan (1985:77) asserts, “Defective language learning is often attributed to defective syllabus design, the student does not learn the language properly because we do not teach the right things or because we recognize what we teach is the wrong way.” This dissatisfaction with the way language education, particularly English language education is practiced has been widely researched and discussed. No particular philosophy of education or philosophy has given ready answers. Perhaps an informed ‘eclectic’ approach is the most useful. Eclecticism suggests to move beyond methods and device methods and strategies which work in the context of each classroom. The Position Paper on Teaching of English (NCERT, 2005) suggests varied strategies suitable for different stages of schooling. An informed teacher is expected to have knowledge of salient aspects of various approaches and methods of language teaching and adopt and adapt what works in her classroom to create an engaging environment for language learning.

Multilingualism is a natural phenomenon which relates positively to cognitive flexibility and scholastic achievement. Several recent studies have effectively demonstrated the positive relationship of bilingualism with cognitive growth and scholastic achievement. There is a highly positive relationship between bilingualism, cognitive flexibility and scholastic achievement. Bilingual children not only have control over several different languages but are also academically more creative and socially more tolerant. The wide range of linguistic skills that they control equips them to negotiate different social situations more efficiently. There is also substantial evidence to show that bilingual children excel in divergent thinking. Since, we also know of the positive relationship between multilingualism, cognitive growth and educational achievement, there is every need to promote multilingual education in schools.

Check Your Progress 1

Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below:
   b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1) What is Multilingualism? Do you have children in your classroom who speak different languages? Which are these languages?

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2) How will you as a teacher use the languages of learners for teaching-learning of English?

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3) How will you support English language learning of learners who has less exposure to the language?

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1.3 THE STATUS AND NATURE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN INDIA

According to the Constitution of India, Hindi is the official language of India and English is the associate official language. But what is the situation in fact?

Activity 2

Think about how English is used in your State. Does it have the status of a second language or a foreign language?

Educators define a ‘foreign’ language as one which is studied for the insight it affords into the life of another nation, and a ‘second’ language, as one which is studied for more utilitarian purposes, because of its direct value to the speaker or writer as a citizen of her/his own country. This is by no means an absolute distinction (Pride, 1971, 22-23).

To answer the above question you should think about the purposes for which you and the people you know use English. You may begin with how many languages you know?

1. What language is most commonly used in offices?
2. What percentage of people (approximately) read newspapers (a) in English and (b) in the regional language/MT (Mother tongue)?
3. Which language do people generally use in restaurants, at railway booking counters, when shopping, etc.?
4. When people meet people from other States do they use English/Hindi/some other language?
5. What is the language you find used most often in advertisements and hoardings in (a) towns and (b) in cities?
6. What are some of the most popular TV Programmes? Which language(s) are they in? If people watch programmes in English, do they have any difficulty in understanding the language?
7. To what extent does the man in the street use and understand English? For example, if you asked an auto rickshaw driver or a shopkeeper in your town a question in English would he be able to understand it easily/with difficulty/not at all? Would he be able to answer in English? Generally/occasionally/not at all?
8. What are the languages spoken by students of your class?

An answer to these questions will help you to build a picture of what the status of English is in your State, its importance, and the extent to which its development is possible.
The question of the status of English in India is important because your language teaching-learning situation cannot be separated from the language learning environment outside the classroom. We need to consider the language environment if we are desirous of making a change in the classroom.

Discussion

Be realistic about the general English learning environment of your learners, and then you will find your teaching of English will be much more effective. You should think of using all your resources, and supplementing these resources, if necessary.

For example, you may make effective use of newspaper clippings, magazine advertisements, official forms (rail reservation form, money order form, and so on), billboard messages to motivate the learners to use English in authentic/real life situations.

The nature of English language teaching in India is an outcome of the status of English within the formal learning curriculum as well as its presence in the real world outside. Though English does not have a uniform status in various parts of our country, the following are some of the common ‘roles’ or functional capacities in which ‘English’ is present in India:

English is the associate official language in our country. It is taught as a part of school curriculum for 6 to 12 years, either as a subject or both as a subject and a medium of instruction. Out of the 35 States and Union Territories, 26 States introduce English from Class one as a language (NCERT, 2007).

In context of a global society and India’s participation in it, competence in the use of English has become the passport not only to higher educational opportunities but also to better economic gains. As a library language it wields considerable presence in the arena of higher education. It is, thus, that in school the emphasis has shifted from learning the content of the English lessons to trying to acquire the language skills which will enable the learners to ‘use’ the language.

1.3.1 The Status of English within the Formal Instructional System

In Activity 2, you examined the status of English in your State; now let us examine the status of English language which is set within a formal instruction system. However, before examining a formal language learning situation, let us attempt to look at an informal language learning situation. An informal language learning situation is one where a child picks up the language in the environment for communication. For example, a young child learns to use language functionally, i.e., to get things done or to express himself/herself. This expression could be transactional or self-expressive in nature. Through play, chat and observations which constitute easy, spontaneous use of language, the child develops language skills. Thus, by using language, the child develops language skills, i.e., he/she learns to speak, read, listen, write effectively and independently.

The formal instructional system is, however, very different. Here, we are referring to organised learning on a large scale, with the instructional system providing certification at the end of a learning programme.

We must examine carefully the differences in the teaching and learning of languages in formal and informal situations. Early language learning involves learning of the mother tongue (MT) or first language (L1). Learning English for most Indians is learning a second language (L2).
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<th>Formal Language Learning</th>
<th>Informal Language Learning</th>
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<td>L2, L3, etc. from Class I (English Medium)</td>
<td>MT, L1</td>
<td>1. Language taught</td>
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<tr>
<td>From Class III, IV, V, VI (vernacular language medium)</td>
<td>From birth onwards, in informal situations of language learning</td>
<td>2. Age</td>
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<td>More formal language descriptions, formal grammar learnt</td>
<td>Functional</td>
<td>3. Use of Language</td>
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<td>Teacher may comment, focus on errors or sometimes reprimand</td>
<td>Parents repeat, encourage and correct</td>
<td>4. Treatment of errors</td>
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<td>Predominantly in the written form</td>
<td>Oral</td>
<td>5. Exposure</td>
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However, these ‘characteristics’ of formal and informal language learning situations should not be seen as exclusive to each other. Languages are acquired both informal and more ‘naturally’ in informal contexts.

**Activity 3**

What is the status of English in your State in formal language situations? Answer some of the questions below and see if you can get a picture.

a) What is the pass mark in your school/college? Is English medium compulsory at college?

b) Are other subjects taught in English? If not, in which class does English instruction begin?

c) What does the language examination assess, competence of language skills (reading, speaking writing, listening) or content of the text (If so, in what percentage)?

d) What do you teach while teaching a language? Grammar or the use of language or something else?

e) Do you let your students make errors? How do you deal with their errors?

f) What percentage of your learners shows interest in using English within/outside the classroom?

g) What percentage of students in your class has access to English in the speech communities of their home?

h) Is there a demand for English medium in your State?

**Discussion**

Answer these questions one by one. These answers will give you a picture about the needs and objectives of teaching English within your classroom. If you gear your teaching to the actual needs of your learners, they would be far more motivated to learn the language. A need assessment of your learners may be undertaken by finding out where and when your learners use/would like to ‘use’ English.
Questionnaire I given at the end of this Unit can help you undertake this activity. This kind of assessment will not only help you utilise all possible resources to facilitate language learning but also enable you to pitch your classroom activities at the appropriate level, keeping in mind the English language competence of your learners and the role that it plays in their lives.

It has been very often seen that grammar teaching or even knowing grammar rules need not lead to correct language use. This is so because an average Indian learner does not get enough exposure to English to internalise its rules as a native speaker would.

In this kind of language learning environment where exposure to the target language is very limited (Acquisition-poor environment) the language class needs to provide opportunities to the learners to use/experiment with the language. The learners should not be spoon-fed answers to exercises at the end of each lesson. They should be allowed to struggle to express themselves, so that they learn to use the language. They should be encouraged to speak to each other in anxiety free situations so that the sense of hesitation and stress that they feel in using the language gradually disappears. Each and every error of the learner need not be corrected. The habit of peer or self-correction should be inculcated so that the learners can monitor and help each other correct their use of English.

Check Your Progress 2

Notes:  a) Write your answers in the space given below:
       b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

4) Does the language teacher need to assess the need(s) of the language learners to learn the language? Give reasons for your answer.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

1.4 THE NEEDS AND OBJECTIVES OF TEACHING ENGLISH

In a vast and heterogeneous society like ours, the needs of the learners for learning English will not be uniform.

As teachers we should be able to identify the requirements of various groups of students and try to provide for each such group the type of courses which will be relevant to their needs.

Assessment of the English language needs of the learners when translated into the goals/objectives of the language programme would make the language learning situation sensitive and responsive to the differences in the speech communities of the learners. This would facilitate language learning by ensuring sustained learner interest and a high degree of motivation.

Despite the heterogeneity of English language learning situations, the English learning environment may be classified into two categories.
a) **Acquisition-rich environments** are language learning environments where besides the formal language learning in the classroom, the learner has access to English in the speech community of his/her home and immediate neighbourhood especially peer group.

For example for a young child in an urban, educated upper middle class home, the preferred language of communication at home with parents and siblings may be English. In this environment, the chances that the child acquires fluent command over English are far higher because the learning of English is not restricted to the classroom/school. Opportunities for viewing various TV programmes and movies in English are also a part of acquisition-rich environments.

This, however, is an exception and not the normal situation in the context of English language learning in India.

b) **Acquisition-poor environments** are those language learning environments where exposure of the target language (here English) is limited to the classroom and the language is absent in the speech community of the learner’s home or his immediate neighbourhood especially peer group. In such an environment, opportunities of learning the language are severely limited and occur only in the formal educational setting. For example, for a child from a lower middle class background in our country, exposure to English is restricted to the English textbook and the English teacher. This makes the learning of the language far more difficult. The majority of English learning situations in India are of this kind. In these situations, the teacher needs to be especially sensitive to the motivation/needs of the learners for learning the language so that he/she may adapt the materials and organise the learning environment to fulfill the learners’ needs.

To cite an example, for a learner enrolled in an English language programme at the University, the motivation for learning English will be much higher if the course concentrates on the teaching of study skills, reading comprehension techniques, note-making, writing term-papers, etc., because these are the skills that a university graduate requires. But these skills are rarely taught to the students.

In a country like ours where the learners differ considerably with reference to their needs for learning English as well as their competence in the language, an omnibus (i.e. broad-based inclusive) curriculum cannot be relevant. There is a need not only to develop different English learning modules keeping in mind the vast variety of learner needs, but also to train the language teacher to adapt the given material. The teacher should also attempt to use the socio-cultural milieu of the learner as a storehouse of materials and utilize it optimally for language learning. For example:

a) to practice adjectives the teacher may ask the learners to gather familiar objects around their houses bring them to class and describe them.

b) learners may be taught how to give direction by drawing a map from school to their homes and telling their peers how to get there.

c) familiar and simple cooking recipes may be utilised to develop the skill of giving instructions.

d) Learners may be told stories in English and in the mother tongues.

### 1.4.1 Why do we teach English?

**Activity 4**

1. Do we teach English so that students can pass examinations based upon the content of the textbook(s)?

2. Do we view English as a medium for mastering language skills?
Discussion

Any meaningful language programme must prepare the learners to use the language as a medium for communication and not as a content based subject.

In our country too, we can see a shift from content-based teaching to skill-based teaching in schools where interactive learning materials are in use. These materials focus on developing various language skills in English. However, these efforts need to be stepped-up. They should also be extended to the lower levels, i.e. the elementary, and the primary level.

1.4.2 Objectives of Teaching English

It is believed that teaching of a language means teaching what has been traditionally known as LSRW skills as the objectives of language teaching. However, these are not discrete skills but have to be learnt in an integrated manner. We now make a case for holistic language development in children. When we speak, we also listen simultaneously. When we write we are also reading. This engagement with language enables us to internalize the underlying grammaticality of the language. This leads to language learning. Our classroom should attempt to promote language learning adopting such processes where learners get time to get engaged with the language by using for real life purposes in order to manipulate and think about the linguistic aspects. Learners learn the second or foreign language by using it for pragmatic purposes which includes not only social use of language but also for academic purposes. Cummins and Swain in their book *Bilingualism in Education* (Longman, London, 1986) make a very fundamental distinction between Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Advance Language Proficiency (CALP). The language ability that is associated with BICS largely involves the skills to perform effectively in situations that are rich in context and undemanding at the level of cognition. The language of here and now and that of peer group social interaction belongs to the domain of BICS. CALP refers to language use in academic spheres and includes abstract thinking. An effective language course in school should aim at promoting BICS and CALP. Objectives of language teaching should enable the learners at the end of ten-year schooling to develop skills and competencies to use the language for real life purpose in a social situation as well as to use the language for academic or higher order thinking purposes. The National Curriculum Framework – 2005 proposes the following objectives for language teaching-learning for high school:

(a) **The competence to understand what she hears**: A learner must be able to understand various verbal and non-verbal clues coming from the speaker for comprehending what has been said. She should also be skilled at listening and understanding in a non-linear fashion by making connections and drawing inferences. It is also important to appreciate that the sounds that are fundamental to the growth of children are not just individual language sounds; connected real-life speech with all its hesitation, pauses and silences is most important.

(b) **Ability to read with comprehension, and not merely decode**: She should develop the habit of reading in a non-linear manner using various syntactic, semantic and graphophonemic cues. She must be able to construct meaning by drawing inferences and relating to the text with her previous knowledge. She must also develop the confidence of reading the text with a critical eye and posing questions while reading. The ultimate test of reading ability is a critical appreciation of an unseen text that is at least one stage above the cognitive level of the reader.
(c) **Effortless expression**: She should be able to employ her communicative skills in a variety of situations. Her repertoire must have a range of styles. She must be able to engage in a discussion in a logical, analytical and creative manner. All this will inevitably involve an integration of all the skills.

(d) **Coherent writing**: Writing is not a mechanical skill; it involves a rich control on grammar, vocabulary, content, punctuation as well as abilities to organise thoughts coherently often using a variety of cohesive devices such as linkers and lexical manipulation through synonymy, etc. A learner should develop the confidence to express her thoughts effortlessly and in an organised manner. The student must be encouraged and trained to choose her own topic, organise her ideas and write with a sense of audience. This is possible only if her writings are seen as a process and not as a product. She should be able to use writing for a variety of purposes and in a variety of situations ranging from informal to very formal.

(e) **Control over different registers**: Language is never used in a uniform fashion. It has innumerable varieties, shades and colours which surface in different domains and in different situations. These variations, known as registers, should form part of a student’s repertoire. Besides the register of school subjects, a student must be able to understand and use the variety of language being used in other domains such as music, sports, films, gardening, construction work, cookery, etc.

(f) **Scientific study of language**: In a language class, the teaching approaches adopted and the tasks undertaken should be such that they lead a child to go through the whole scientific process of collecting data, observing the data, classifying it according to its similarities and differences, making hypotheses, etc. Thus, linguistic tools can and must play a significant role in developing a child’s cognitive abilities. This would be much better than teaching normative rules of grammar. Moreover, this approach is particularly effective in multilingual classrooms.

(g) **Creativity**: In a language classroom, a student should get ample space to develop her imagination and creativity. Classroom ethos and healthy teacher-student relationship build confidence enable the student to use her creativity uninhibitedly for text transaction and in other appropriate activities.

(h) **Sensitivity**: Language classrooms can be an excellent reference point for familiarising students with our rich culture, heritage and aspects of our contemporary life. Language classroom and texts have a lot of scope to make students sensitive towards surroundings, people and the nation.

(Syllabus for Secondary Stage, NCERT 2005, Languages, pp.6-8)

**Activity 5**

1) Refer to the objectives of English language teaching-learning of the syllabus of your State and compare the same with the National level Syllabus.

2) Look at the textbook you are using in your classroom and say how the objectives of language learning are realized in the book?

**1.5 LET US SUM UP**

The nature of English language teaching in India is an outcome of the status of English within the formal learning curriculum as well as its presence and role in the real world.
outside. The following are some of the common functional capacities in which English is present in India:

- as an associate official language;
- as a library language;
- as a passport to higher educational opportunities and better economic gains; and
- as a part of the school curriculum for 6 to 12 years.

Language teaching programmes must be oriented towards catering to the needs of the learners so that in an acquisition poor environment, the learning of English is facilitated by the intrinsic motivation and interest of the learners. Any language programme must aim at making the learner an autonomous and efficient user of the language. The teaching can facilitate this process by providing opportunities for active language use to the learners.

1.6 KEY WORDS

Foreign language: A foreign language is one which is studied for the insight it affords into the life of another nation (Pride, 1971).

Second Language: a second language is a language other than one’s first language. It is learnt for utilitarian reasons because of its direct value to the speaker or writer as a citizen of his own country (Pride, 1971).

acquisition-poor environment: a language learning environment were access to the language is restricted to the classroom, thus making acquisition of a specific language difficult.

acquisition-rich environment: a language learning environment, where besides formal language learning in the classroom, the learner has access to the target language in the speech community of his home, making acquisition easier.

content-based teaching: a language learning programme where the learners are taught and examined on the content of the textbooks(s).

skill-based teaching: a language learning programme where the learners are given opportunity to develop their language skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) and examined in terms of their competence in these skills.

1.7 ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

1. Attempt the question yourself.
Check Your Progress 2

4. The language teacher not only needs to assess the need of the language learners to learn the language but also needs to evaluate their existing competence in the target language in order to be able to organize the language learning activities and materials to fulfill these needs. If these needs are catered to the learners will be extremely motivated to learn the language.

5. The objectives of a language learning programme should emerge out of the need(s) to learn that language. For example, a senior secondary learner from a vernacular medium school, who plans to enroll in an English medium bachelor’s degree programme in Commerce will need to be familiar with the English terms used in Commerce. He/she will also need to be trained to acquire study skills like note-making, reading comprehension techniques, etc. If a learner needs to learn English only because it is a compulsory part of the school curriculum and if the evaluation pattern in a school concentrates primarily on writing and reading, the teaching of these skills will gain importance over the other two (especially speaking). So the learner may not make sustained effort to speak the language.

1.8 SUGGESTED READINGS


NCERT. (2005b), National Focus Group Position Paper on Teaching of English, New Delhi, India.

NCERT. (2005c), National Focus Group Position Paper on Teaching of English, New Delhi, India.


Methods of Teaching English, Block-I (1996), (PGCTE), Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad.
### Questionnaires – 1

**Name**: .................................................................

**Age**: .................................................................

**Class**: .................................................................

**Address**: .................................................................

**Mother’s Profession**: .................................................................

**Father’s Profession**: .................................................................

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#### A. When do you use English?

<p>| Tick mark in the appropriate column: | In the Classroom: |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Many Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. a) When talking to friends.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. b) When talking to the teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. c) During the English period</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At Home:  

| 2. a) When talking to your brother or sister. |
| 2. b) When talking to friends. |
| 2. c) When talking to guests. |
| 2. d) When talking to your mother. |
| 2. e) When talking to your father. |
| 2. f) When talking to neighbours. |

*When talking to the shopkeeper.*  

*When asking for information at the Bank or Post Office, etc.*

---

#### B. Can you read, speak or write any other language besides Hindi and English?  
**Answer**: .................................................................

#### C. Which language do you use the most?

1. i) **At home**: .................................................................
   
2. ii) **In School**: .................................................................
   
3. iii) **With friends**: .................................................................
D. Which books and magazines do you read?
   i) in Hindi
   .........................................
   .........................................
   .........................................
   .........................................
   .........................................
   .........................................
   .........................................
   .........................................
   ii) In English
   .........................................
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E. Which newspaper(s) do you read?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Many Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature, Need and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectives of English as</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>a Second Language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

F. Which T.V. Programmes do you watch?
   i) in Hindi
   .........................................
   .........................................
   .........................................
   .........................................
   .........................................
   .........................................
   .........................................
   .........................................
   ii) In English
   .........................................
   .........................................
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   .........................................
   .........................................
   .........................................
UNIT 2  THE LANGUAGE LEARNER

Structure

2.0  Objectives

2.1  Introduction: Learner Factors that Affect Learning in School
   2.1.1  The Personal and Unique Quality of Learning

2.2  The Student’s Readiness to Engage with a New Topic

2.3  Interest and Motivation for Schoolwork or Studies

2.4  Learner Characteristics that Influence Learning at School
   2.4.1  Characteristics Lying in the Cognitive Domain
   2.4.2  Learning Styles and Preferences
   2.4.3  Multiple intelligences

2.5  Flexibility in the Curriculum: Accepting Diversity and Promoting Autonomy

2.6  Let Us Sum Up

2.7  Answers

2.0   OBJECTIVES

This unit aims to help extend your understanding and appreciation of

- the various ways in which children (as whole persons) differ from one another
- the distinction between capacity to learn and alternative styles or modes of learning
- how some of these characteristics influence children’s engagement with the curriculum
- special aptitudes that nearly all children have which can make them contributors to the curriculum.

2.1  INTRODUCTION: LEARNER FACTORS THAT AFFECT LEARNING IN SCHOOL

Learning occurs both through natural process of socialization in everyday life and through planned formal instruction in school. Both are important for the development of the child into an adult who is well integrated with society. In this unit we will focus on child related factors that influence learning in school, which is our primary (but of course not only) concern. What are some of the personal characteristics of learners that we need to keep in mind when developing the curriculum and planning classroom activities? Some of the points we discuss relate to school based learning in general, and some are more directly related to learning language.

2.1.1  The Personal and Unique Quality of Learning

Learning is an individual process. Even if there is a class of thirty, receiving the same lessons based on the same textbook and monitored by the same tests, each child’s learning is a unique process. Schools and classes within them may be large, but it is the progress of the individual – shown in the report card—that children (and parents) are interested in. Even in our mass education system with several lakhs appearing
for a Board examination, each answer script is evaluated separately. Thus what each child learns from common instruction is our focus of interest. Earlier we tended to think that the new knowledge in a lesson simply got added to a store in the learner’s mind. This was called the “jug and mug model” of teaching. Knowledge from the teacher’s jug is poured like milk or water into each child’s mug. We know now that children’s minds are not ‘mugs’ of the same type, and little packets of (new) knowledge are not simply received as they are. Even more important is the idea that learners are not only receiving additional packets of knowledge. It is useful to think of each child’s development over time as a journey on which many things are experienced, including of course what comes from school lessons. The learning from all these prior experiences is what each child brings to class on any day. The new input from the lesson has to be integrated with the knowledge that is already there. So the new learning is not a simple matter of adding little bits. Various personal qualities of the child will affect this process of learning or ‘uptake’ from a lesson. A recognition of this uniqueness—which means diversity in the class—is central to the approach to curriculum and learning. One of the major challenges facing the teacher is to adapt the standard or common material in the text book to suit the qualities or needs of varied learners.

In this unit we take up two themes that might help us understand more about individual differences among learners that we hope common instruction will respond to. One is the notion of readiness for learning—the link between prior learning and what is new in a lesson. The other is the variation in children’s ways of learning—which is related to how they engage with and take in the new knowledge that is presented to them in school lessons. Our focus will be on language learning.

### 2.2 THE STUDENT’S READINESS TO ENGAGE WITH A NEW TOPIC

All of us have had the experience as students in school of finding certain topics taken up in class ‘difficult’. The basic ideas did not make sense, the explanations did not help and we could not handle the practice exercises or problems. In some cases a sensitive and resourceful teacher has provided special help in various ways to help learners overcome such difficulties fairly quickly, so that they could keep up with the others. In other less happy cases, the difficulty and lack of understanding was overcome only much later—in remedial lessons, but some times never at all. This happens over and over again to many students at all levels. This is because there is a mismatch between what the teaching plan for the topic assumes as available prior knowledge and what individual students actually have. This is a problem that always comes up when a standard syllabus is covered according to a fixed calendar. Many learners are not ready for the given lesson. If they do not learn as expected, it is because of this inadequate preparation, and not because of low learning capacity.

The standard syllabus for any subject is based on certain logical and reasonable assumptions. The syllabus for Class V builds on the Class IV syllabus, and the Class VI syllabus builds on what is in the Class V syllabus, and so on. The problem in the classroom arises because every child has not properly learnt or mastered everything covered earlier. Teachers often do some revision before taking up a new topic. This is of course useful, but may not be enough. The important concepts that the new lesson or unit will build on need to be identified carefully and revision should target these points. This will enable those who are less prepared or behind others to follow the new material and keep up with the others in class. The important idea about readiness is that it is not a fixed characteristic of the child, but a highly variable factor closely linked to particular topics. A child might be unclear about certain
point of grammar (e.g., She lives in X / She is living in X / She lived in X). But the same child might know most of the words in a story or poem that comes in the same textbook unit. In other subjects too we will find children having difficulties with ideas related to one topic but at the same time learning quite happily in another area. Thus the factor of low readiness which may come in different lessons and subjects is not related to any basic ability or capacity to learn. It is not a fixed characteristic of the child. A student who shows lack of relevant knowledge in any area needs to be given specifically planned help. As mentioned earlier this will allow her/him to catch up with others. If sufficient help is provided in the initial weeks of a term, a student’s readiness problem might slowly disappear. This is one of the most challenging areas in pedagogy.

Check Your Progress 1

Notes:  
a) Write your answers in the space given below:

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1 What is ‘readiness’? What are the ways in which this factor can be used effectively by the teacher in the learning process?

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...................................................................................................................
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...................................................................................................................
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2 ‘Readiness’ is not a fixed characteristic of a child. Discuss the statement in the light of what you have read in the unit and understood from your own experience.

...................................................................................................................
...................................................................................................................
...................................................................................................................
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...................................................................................................................

2.3 INTEREST AND MOTIVATION FOR SCHOOLWORK OR STUDIES

All of us must have had the experience ourselves or of those we know well losing interest in studies and wanting to give up “ and even drop out “ at some time or the other. Fortunately, these negative moods change after some time in many cases. When these students get back to studies they usually have a large backlog to deal with or may have lost a year. We need to note the distinction between this general loss of interest and motivation, and negative attitude students sometimes develop to a particular subject or topic or teacher. This will affect learning in that subject, but the student might be doing quite well in other subjects, and on the whole be happy at school. The general problem of interest and motivation is not linked to a particular subjects or teacher. The negative attitude seems to apply to practically all school activities, which can also lead to getting more isolated and unhappy. There are two possible causes of this condition. One is the feeling that everything is too difficult
and that there is no real help from teachers or students (friends). It could be that the
student started the term with many gaps in prior learning (readiness), but no diagnosis
leading to appropriate action was taken up. She/he would have found lessons difficult
to follow from the beginning. Sometimes other children may make fun of such
students. Unit tests reinforce the fact of being far behind others, and usually no help
to improve is provided. All this can lead to feeling unable to do anything successfully
and a sense of worthlessness. (We will discuss this idea again under self-esteem).
Such loss of confidence often makes a child unwilling even to try, and interest and
motivation are slowly lost. Such occurrences are not the individual teacher’s fault:
the problem lie in the larger system. The already overburdened teacher cannot provide
intensive individual attention to each student. However, as already noted, the teacher
can try and adapt the syllabus and materials to some extent. The important point
here is that teachers need to convey to ‘weak’ students that they (teachers) are
aware of students’ difficulties and are trying to help them. Encouragement can be
shown in small ways. The feeling of being cared for matters greatly to such children.
Reaching out to such children is linked to what we said about the inclusive classroom.
Children need to feel they are welcome in school and class, and also that they are
respected. The gentle pressure they feel should be to try and keep trying, and not
necessarily to succeed.

Low motivation as we noted is nearly always a temporary condition initially. It can
become more pronounced if there is no support. But helping a student to overcome
loss of motivation and interest even in one subject area can have positive effect in
other areas also. Thus we can see the value of creating and maintaining a supportive
social climate in classrooms.

Check your progress -2

1 Why do students lose interest in school work in general? What can be teacher
do to help them renew their interest in their studies?

2.4 LEARNER CHARACTERISTICS THAT INFLUENCE LEARNING AT SCHOOL

The two factors we considered above –readiness and motivation”are strongly
influenced by what happens to the child, in other words, by external events. By
changing the environment a student’s readiness and motivation can be changed.
There are also factors which influence learning that lie within the child and seem to
fairly stable. When we describe a person we usually focus on such qualities. As
students of literature at high school we have all written ‘character sketches’ of
individuals who appear as characters in plays or stories. The qualities focused on
are ones that lie within and do not change. Certain qualities of individuals that are
related to their general nature or personality are of interest to us in the context of
learning at school. We now look at some of these qualities that differentiate different
types of learners among children. We must remember that these characteristics
especially of school age children are not altogether fixed. Though relatively stable
they can change gradually —and teachers and peers can contribute to this process.
Some qualities appear to be more related to the capacity to learn and solve problems especially in the context of studies at school. A second category is more related to preferences and habitual ways of doing things “what a person is comfortable with. Feelings and social relationships are covered here.

2.4.1 Characteristics Lying in the Cognitive Domain

a) General scholastic ability

One of the very commonly used words when teachers and parents talk about children in school is ‘bright’. Parents sometimes compare one child with a brother or sister and describe one as ‘bright’ and the other as less so. Teachers also know who the ‘bright’ ones in their classes are. The term is associated with ability to understand and remember what is taught in various subjects, learning quickly and doing well in tests. It is unfortunately often used carelessly as we shall see later in this section. The basis of the term is the notion of intelligence “which is well known (but not well understood.) It is true that some individuals consistently perform better in school tests, and are good at solving puzzles and riddles and in memory based games. They do relatively well on mental ability (or intelligence) tests which have items on reasoning, pattern recognition, problem solving. The mental quality or ability that such tests measure is also called scholastic aptitude since this seems to help students to do well in their studies which are related to school subjects.

We need to remember that the label ‘studies’ does not include learning in many areas which are seen as important for the holistic or well rounded development of the child: art, music, dance, sports, drama, team work, caring for others, leadership, and so on.

Obviously students with a higher level of scholastic ability will perform better in many class activities and tests related to them than others, especially when knowing and remembering what is in prescribed texts and writing long answers are involved. But curriculum transaction today also includes more open ended activities (not linked to a single ‘correct answer’) : dialogues, dramatization of themes, situations from stories and poems, creating displays/charts, sharing experiences outside school and so on. In this wider context of activities where written answers (to test questions) are only one component, those students with high scholastic aptitude will not automatically have any big advantage. So we can state that the general level of scholastic ability of students does not influence their language learning in class in a strong and consistent way. This is especially true now, when communication skills are being emphasized rather than knowledge about language. Therefore, teachers should not simply assume that learners who get high or low grades in other subjects will perform similarly in the language class. The earlier discussion about prior learning and readiness is relevant here. Students who have not learnt what is needed as background for new learning will of course face difficulties. This is related to lack of opportunity to learn, not to low capacity to learn. While we should be happy about students who are doing well in studies, we must be very careful not to judge others as low in scholastic ability without proper evidence. We should expect so called scholastically weak students also to do well—especially in the language area.

b) Language learning aptitude

We often come across people who have learnt a number of languages both at school and college and when they have travelled abroad. So there is a popular idea that some people have a knack for languages, just like having a feel for music or dancing or being good with ones hands. In the second half of the last century the study of
languages, especially foreign languages, began to increase—covering more languages and more students. Linguists and psychologists took up research on language aptitude, and two well known tests were developed: the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) of Carroll and Sapon (1959), and the Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery (PLAB) of Pimsleur (1966). These tests have sections dealing with specific sub-skills like phonetic coding, grammatical sensitivity, sound discrimination, sound symbol association, short term memory after rote learning. They do not look like language tests at all, as they focus on some of the ‘hidden’ cognitive processes that underly the speaking or listening we normally do while using a language. The theory is that if a person gets high scores on these sections, s/he has basic abilities which are a big advantage when learning a new language. These tests were found to be fairly useful in identifying potentially good students of language(s) and those who found language study difficult. They were widely used especially in the USA for several years.

We are interested here in the nature of a basic aptitude for learning language, languages actually, which has implications for pedagogy. Here we find that the two tests have limitations. One is that they contain tasks (items) which look complicated and only someone who has been educated in formal school for about eight years would understand the instructions. The tests are meant for older learners, and so they do not give us any useful data about the ‘language aptitude’ of primary school children. Secondly, they were developed more than half a century ago. The approach to language instruction then emphasized drills and pattern practice, learning about the system (rules of grammar and pronunciation). Now, with much greater focus on meaning and participation in communicative activities, the processes and sub-skills involved in learning would be different. New aptitude tests need to be developed.

If we go back to what we noted about children’s learning and learning capacity, we find there is a basic problem with the idea of aptitude. All children learn to speak their home languages long before they start formal school. There is no indication of different levels (low, average, high) of aptitude among children: everyone learns successfully. It is true that when the learning of reading and writing starts in school, there are always different success levels. This is the challenge we face. How can we make the teaching—learning of the written form of language more like the success story of learning to speak the home language. There is no scientific evidence that differences in aptitude for language are a factor in early learning at school. Anyway, our education policy commits us to help children learn languages—three in most cases. Aptitude is not a relevant or helpful idea for us. Later when, college level optional and advanced language courses come up, language aptitude test scores can help in choosing to study or not study languages as special subjects. It is in such a setting that the MLAT and LAB were most helpful.

Check your progress -3

1. What is intelligence? Do children with scholastic ability/intelligence do well in all subjects?

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2.4.2 Learning Styles and Preferences

c) Learning Styles

Educational psychologists studying the processes of learning have found that individuals seem to have different styles of learning. These are not linked to higher or lower levels of the capacity to learn. They are rather equally natural and effective ways of engaging cognitively with new experiences and ideas. The alternative styles are rather like being left-handed or right-handed, but they are not so sharply different or fixed.

A student’s typical learning style in class is an orientation or preference for how information and ideas are taken in and processed. But even these styles can and often do change over time, though only slowly. Also students can have different styles for different types of subject matter or curricular activities. Learning styles are of relevance to us because they influence learning. If there is a match between the teaching style and the student’s style, learning will be more comfortable and effective. A mismatch could result in obstacles to effective learning.

Several different ways of describing and categorizing styles have been proposed by various scholars. One survey found there were about 70 such models! Obviously there is a lot of overlap, because many different words are used to talk about the same thing. We will look here only at a few interesting styles sets of differences that might be relevant when planning for teaching. This overview only provides a general background. Some of the interesting areas in which style differences have been identified are:

(i) Sensory preference

The word teaching is associated primarily with something the teacher provides or does — usually telling or presenting. Some input (received through the senses — listening, seeing, feeling) is central to teaching-learning experiences especially in relation to subject matter in the syllabus. Remember that the same message can be conveyed or presented in different ways. For instance, when we have to give someone directions for reaching a house from the station or bus stand, this can be done in different ways — using words mainly, or words and gestures or a diagram/map. Similarly, when teaching a lesson, the presentation could use different types of sensory input.

One difference among learners is in the way of ‘taking in’ information, i.e., which one suits them best. These are orientations or preferences for the mode of sensory input. The possibilities or options are: visual, auditory, tactile and kinesthetic.

Visual is based on seeing. Students with this orientation learn best from written statements (on the board or worksheets) and pictures, diagrams, models they can see.
**Auditory** is based on hearing. Spoken messages (like teacher talk) seem best for some students to learn.

**Tactile** (relating to touch) and **kinesthetic** (sense of moving body parts) are taken together. Some students learn best when they can touch and feel objects (especially models) or are themselves moving (as in demonstrations and role play.)

Most teachers would say that they use all these ‘methods’ at different times during their lessons. And they would be right. The point here is that specific ways of presenting information can be chosen and used in a more planned manner after the teacher comes to know about individual students’ styles. This is especially useful when giving individual attention to students or organizing activity in pairs or small groups. Students also differ in the way they engage with or cognitively process the ‘inputs’ they receive. We now look at these differences in the way children learn.

**(ii) Whole or part focused learning**

Some learners tend to focus more on general ideas or the ‘big picture’, while others pay much more attention to the small details. This has also been described as the global versus sequential style of processing information. Some students learn better when the teacher presents and discusses general ideas and assigns related tasks; they may have a tendency to ‘switch off’ when a lot of time is spent on small details. But others may respond well to specifics and details, and feel somewhat lost when the focus is on abstract ideas.

This orientation is related to a broader factor called field dependence – field independence. Field dependent individuals are influenced by the context. For example, in a group where most people favour one opinion in a set of possibilities they are more likely to agree with others. Those who are more field independent are better able to see basic facts or arguments by themselves. This does not mean that they are independent thinkers or misfits. Their style of thinking is more analytical, that is all.

**(iii) Inductive vs. deductive learning**

Inductive learning occurs when a body of specific facts or data is given and effort is directed to finding pattern(s) or inferring a general principle. Tasks involving trying out possible explanations—exploring without knowing beforehand what is the best thing to do—includes such learning. Grammar is often taught inductively in deductive learning, usually a rule or principle is given to begin with, and the discussion is on its implications and applications. Many problems in mathematics and science involve sets of deductions. Here too it is found that some students are more comfortable and learn better with the first of these approaches. They seem to enjoy finding things out for themselves—learning by discovery. Other students are more comfortable when principles and rules are stated, and the challenge is to understand and apply them.

**(iv) Convergent thinking vs. divergent thinking**

This dimension is related to the distinction sometimes made between ‘intelligence’ and ‘creativity’. Psychologists who have studied the way people deal with problems that require thinking and analysis have found two broad approaches. The more common one is to analyze the problem logically using relevant knowledge from mathematics or biology or economics, and then proceed systematically—step by step towards the solution. There is a gradual progress of narrowing down—or converging—to the solution. This is rather similar to the deductive approach
mentioned above. Some people do not go directly to the problem as given. They will look at it from different angles and sometimes even try to change or reformulate it. This can lead to unusual or creative suggestions. The process here is one of opening up or widening the discussion. That is why the term divergent is used. Many innovations or discoveries in science and new theories have come from people who were divergent in their thinking. However, both approaches are useful and important. Having convergent and divergent thinking students in the same class is a great resource. The problems introduced in class should allow both types to try their approaches and share their experiences.

These learning styles were mentioned here mainly to illustrate what they are. There are many others. Note that there are no ‘good’ or ‘bad’ styles. What we have seen are equally useful and effective alternative ways of learning. If teachers can organize some aspects of their teaching to match the styles of different students, this could facilitate better learning. To enhance the chances of such matching of styles, teachers need to add more variety to their teaching styles—by including more types of presentations and activities in their lesson plans. They need not know all the names and definitions of several learning styles. Once they have the basic concept, as they interact with successive batches of learners they will recognize different learning styles. This knowledge can guide them when planning their teaching.

d) Personality dispositions – feelings, emotions and social interactions

The term personality is a familiar one. When we talk about and describe individuals, we always say something about their personality—their typical ways of behaving in their daily lives and especially when relating to others. This is something in addition to and different from their abilities and skills, achievements, status and so on. When students write about ‘my favourite teacher’, ‘my hero’ these personal qualities are emphasized. These are fairly stable qualities or characteristics of a person (referred to as traits), and can be seen even in children. The study of personality is one of the major sub-fields of psychology, and involves many different theories and models. Several personality dimensions have been proposed. We will look at a few of them here to get a sense of what personality factors are. They are of interest because they seem to influence learning, but in a different manner than the more cognitive factors we just looked at.

One widely mentioned list of personality dimensions (called the big five)—aspects on which individuals differ—are the following

**Extraversion - Intraversion**

A person near the extraversion end is generally active, energetic, outgoing, talkative, friendly.

**Openness - Closed Mindedness**

A person high on openness end is likely to be curious, imaginative, original, have wide interests.

**Conscientiousness — Undirectedness**

A person high on conscientiousness behaves in an organized, efficient manner and is thorough and reliable in getting things done.

**Agreeableness - antagonism**

An agreeable person is generally good natured, kind, trusting, generous, modest, appreciative
Neuroticism - Stability

A person high on neuroticism is often anxious and insecure, gets upset easily and shows signs of self-pity.

This is only an outline. The descriptions above are not at all complete. They give us a general sense of what psychologists treat as aspects of personality. We must note carefully that we cannot put people (especially children) into such categories. Even psychologists who conduct elaborate tests are careful about this. What is important here is that these personality dispositions are fairly stable — almost natural qualities of a person. They are not expressions of conscious and deliberate decisions to act in particular ways — they are like all established habits one does not think about. Some dispositions of children (see examples below) seem to be positive for classroom participation, and others less so. The teacher must remember that a child with a certain disposition is not doing anything deliberately.

Let us consider personality related differences among children. Look at the examples below of different types of learners we might see in a class:

- an extraverted child who is active and talkative and likes to be interacting with others
- a child who is more introverted and does not participate actively in group work,
- a child who is anxious and gets easily discouraged,
- a child who seems inattentive and careless about work and does not complete assignments,
- a child who seems keenly interested in new ideas and activities and enjoys engaging with them

We should recognize that no such ‘type’ is good or bad in itself. Also, as noted already, these ways of behaving are not conscious choices made by individuals. Teachers should appreciate that they represent children’s habitual styles or predispositions, and accept them without judging them. It is true that in the conventional classroom, some types seem not well adjusted. Scolding or putting pressure on a child whose behaviour seems ‘negative’ will not help. As far as possible they should be involved in other activities. There are spaces within the curriculum where a shy and withdrawn child or even the child who seems careless is not a ‘problem’. Remember that a high pressure competitive classroom is not the ideal, though it is commonly found. The classroom climate can be changed. As teachers understand such predispositions of children and work sensitively with them, these children too can learn successfully; they may also contribute to others’ learning in small ways. And to repeat an earlier point, changes in aspects of personality can occur, but only slowly and based on a lot of supportive interaction.

Some further dimensions of personality

Another aspect of personality which is fairly easy to see is self-esteem. This is related to confidence and a capacity to accept challenges, take risks and risk failure without much anxiety. A person with high self-esteem is able to accept criticism, and is not worried about being unpopular at times. Teachers and peers are fortunate when there are such students in class. There will also be others low on self-esteem. We can be sure that they were not born that way. They must have been through many negative experiences in the past both in and out of school. Using the many types of situations and activities of the total curriculum to provide such children positive experiences is not very difficult for teachers using the support of peers.
Some people have a marked tendency to be strongly influenced by the opinions of those around them. This disposition is called social conformity. While all members of society are expected to generally follow group norms and obey rules and so on, a certain degree of independence and thinking for oneself is also treated as normal and healthy. A child who seems always to watch what others do and say, and tries to follow them and ‘not be different’ would be high on the social conformity dimension. This is not the same as low ability and confidence. Such a student might be getting quite good grades, but may not participate in group activities where each child has to contribute his/her own ideas and opinions, and may try to avoid tasks calling for innovation.

We have reviewed various dimensions on which there are individual difference among students covering both the cognitive and social–emotional dimensions. We will now look at a model which brings many of these and certain other qualities into a comprehensive picture.

Check Your Progress 4

Notes:  

a) Write your answers in the space given below:
   
   b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1 List the categories of cognitive styles mentioned. According to your experience in the classroom, what are the cognitive styles which best bring about second language learning? You may take up case histories of particular students in answering this question.

2 Have you ever thought of your students’ personality dispositions? Go through the register and mark them according to the categories mentioned. Then make an analysis of these categories and the language learning ability of each student.

2.4.3 Multiple intelligences

A very interesting new discussion about differences among children with implications for their progress as learners started about thirty years ago, when the psychologist Howard Gardner presented his Theory of Multiple Intelligences (in 1983). In this scheme there are seven intelligences, and later an eighth one was added:

Logico-mathematical, linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, spatial, interpersonal and intra-personal. Later an eighth one “naturalistic” was added. Traditionally we thought of ‘intelligence’ as related only to logical thinking and
problem solving. (See sub-section (a) above.) Gardner says that having a feel for words (images, rhymes, striking expressions multiple meanings) is also a form of intelligence. Similarly the powerful sense of one’s own body (which dancers and gymnasts have) is related to intelligence. The basic capacity which allows some persons to become good painters, sculptors, designers of visuals is spatial intelligence. It is easy to see what the names musical and inter-personal point to. Intra-personal intelligence is what allows people (even children) to be happy in themselves (accept their strengths and weaknesses, preserve a high self-concept). Some persons seem to have a feel for the many things in the natural world “living things, water, minerals. They not only enjoy nature but can participate with understanding and sensitivity in activities linked to the environment.

We will not go into more details about multiple intelligences. The significant idea here is that scholastic aptitude is only one among the special aptitudes individuals have. In fact, other psychologists had suggested even before Gardner that ‘social intelligence’ and ‘emotional intelligence’ should also be recognized as special aptitudes some persons might have. The principle that there are different types of aptitudes can be linked to what we noted about the potential for learning that all children have. We see now that often there could also be some special aptitude, which means that knowledge and skill can develop to a level of excellence. Children in schools and classrooms will have different profiles of strengths and interests. We need as teachers to be aware of this diversity and develop the capacity to recognize special aptitudes. But we must be careful not to hastily brand children as strong in one or two areas and weak in all others. We need to nurture their special potentials within our basic commitment to promote the all round development of each child. No learning opportunity should be held back from any child.

Check your progress 5

1 “Knowing individual learner’s learning style can help the language teacher devise learning strategies to enhance their performance...” State what the teacher should do to exploit multiple intelligences of the students in the classroom to an optimum extent.

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2.5 FLEXIBILITY IN THE CURRICULUM: VALUING DIVERSITY AND PROMOTING AUTONOMY

In the sections above we have looked at some of the ways in which individuals differ. The focus has been on individuals as persons who have their own thoughts, feelings, hopes, needs and so on. The focus has been on these psychological aspects, which lie beyond the more obvious physical ones such as sex, age, physical development, health. The survey has been brief and has covered only some of the many possible dimensions of individual differences. Even so we have gained a sense of how vast and rich human diversity can be. A class of 35 or even a small group of 10 has children whose unique personalities will lead to different patterns of learning. This diversity can be seen as a resource now, and we need to try and adapt the
standard curriculum’ to suit individual needs. This is a big challenge of course, but the new approach to the curriculum also has a source of support. This is the principle that the child relates ideas coming as inputs in lessons to her/his life outside the school and thus becomes an active co-creator of new knowledge. This knowledge will be personal and therefore different for different children. In other words, we do not have to try to make every child in a class learn exactly the same things, in the same manner at the same rate which was the underlying principle of the traditional curriculum. In a traditional classroom, the given syllabus was covered following the required or recommended method. Individual teachers tried to give so called weak students some special help. Those who could not meet the requirements ‘failed’ and dropped out of the system and were forgotten. The RTE made drastic change in this process. Every child had the “right to education of quality” through the elementary stage (till Class VIII), which meant no failures, no dropouts. Obviously the education in this framework has to be flexible in many ways. It is necessary in a public education system to have an official syllabus and a prescribed textbook. These can have some elements of flexibility, but the real flexibility and adaptation occurs in the day to day transactions in class. This too is not something the teacher does following a detailed lesson plan with many parallel segments – but rather a process based on the joint activity of the teacher and the learners.

Flexible classroom transaction as described above involves learners’ active participation. Active participation is not only doing what is asked for in exercises and tasks which is typically the same for all students. It means importantly that learners contribute their ideas and suggestions, ask questions to keep the activity going—and not only give answers to questions already raised by the teacher or in the textbook. This points to initiative and independence on the part of students who are members of a team working together (with their different skills and styles) for the benefit of all. Such cooperative activity is an opportunity both to know about others’ talents, styles and needs and to respect them.

**Learner independence and autonomy**

These two terms are often used interchangeably. Both point to the capacity to learn on one’s own – without relying heavily on the teacher’s inputs and guidance. Such a capacity is seen as an asset in the broad setting of a learner centred education. It is especially desirable for students of a second or foreign language who do not normally use this language for social communication outside class. Developing communication skills in a second or foreign language will be greatly aided by the learners own efforts to extend contact with the language by using or practicing it outside class. The typical five sessions a week of classroom contact can only provide a base. Much more effort by the learner is needed for effective skill development. Even intensive courses of 100 or 150 hours spread over about 6 weeks cannot in any way be complete. So the learner’s own efforts are important.

Another perspective on learner independence has come from the distance and open learning sectors. For courses in this mode there are no time tabled ‘teaching sessions’. Well designed course material is provided — in print and audio-visual media. The student has to find a suitable place and time to ‘study’ –keeping to a schedule of 15 (for example) hours a week. Such courses are thus based on self-managed or self directed learning. The effort and discipline has to come from within. We can see here that the personal quality of independence or autonomy is important – for all areas of study, not only language. It is also true that the use of modern technology (ICT) in education is linked to modes of learning which are different from students and live-teacher interaction. This is not to say that the classroom has no importance.
any more, but rather that classroom based instruction has to be supplemented. Here again the learner’s initiative is called upon.

Check your progress -6

1  What was the difference between the traditional curriculum and the present day curriculum? What is learner autonomy?

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2  How do you make your students more independent in acquiring the second language?

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2.6  LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have made a survey of the various ways in which individuals differ, focusing on those characteristics that might influence how they learn. We saw that two negative factors the teacher often encounters – low readiness to deal with subject matter and low interest and motivation—are caused largely by what happens to a student in terms of external conditions. They are not fixed characteristics of the individual and so can be changed by providing appropriate stimulation and support.

We saw that there are differences among children in scholastic aptitude and language learning aptitude, but we also realized that the impact of these factors on learning—especially communication skills development—is not very large. So even in a large class with an apparent gap between strong and weak learners (high marks and low marks in previous tests), there would be many activities that all can participate in and benefit from.

We also looked more closely at a few selected aspects of personality: the typical (in a sense habitual) ways in which individuals think, feel, behave. These qualities have nothing to do with the capacity to learn, but they can influence the ways in which learners participate in curriculum transaction. This influence covers both what they take in from inputs and what they contribute. The interesting aspects of diversity lie in these personal characteristics. The well known model of multiple intelligences brings the cognitive and social, emotional and bodily aspects of personality together as possible areas of special aptitudes. It is important to recognize these qualities, and make instruction flexible. Including a variety of techniques and activities will ensure that more learning styles have a match in the curriculum. Finally we noted the relevance of learner autonomy in education and especially for communication skills.
Check your progress 1

1 Readiness refers to the receptivity of a learner (in terms of ability, attitude and interest) to learn new items. All of us have had experience of some students finding a particular topic ‘difficult’. This is because there is a mismatch between the teaching plan for a particular topic and the students’ ability to assimilate and understand it. In other words, some students lack readiness for a particular topic not because of low learning capacity but because of inadequate understanding/knowledge required for the topic.

A student who shows lack of relevant knowledge in any subject must be given specific planned help. This will allow her/him to catch up with the others. If sufficient help is provided, before a topic is taught, a student’s readiness problem might slowly disappear.

2 Read Section 2.2 for the answer.

Check your progress 2

Here are some clues:

- Subject is too difficult
- There is no real help from teachers or friends
- Sometimes other students make fun of such students, leading to low self-esteem.

Teachers can:

- provide intensive individual attention to those students.
- adapt the syllabus and materials to some extent.
- be sympathetic and sensitive to these students.
- show that they care for such students and encourage them in small ways.

Check your progress 3

1 Intelligence is primarily concerned with reasoning, pattern recognition and problem solving.

Students with higher level of scholastic ability perform better in many class activities. However, they may not perform as well in more open ended activities such as - dialogues, dramatization of themes, situations from stories and poems, creating displays/charts, sharing experiences from outside school and so on.

2 There is no scientific evidence to suggest that aptitude is a factor in early learning at school. Aptitude is not a relevant or helpful idea for teachers at the school level.

Check your progress 4

- A list of categories of cognitive style mentioned:
- Whole or part focus learning (field dependence – field independence)
- Inductive vs. Deductive learning
- Convergent thinking vs. Divergent thinking
2 Do it according to your own experience.

Check your progress 5

- Here are some hints:
  - Teacher should be aware of the diversity of the children, their strengths and interests.
  - Teacher should recognize special aptitude of the children and nurture their special potential.

Check your progress -6

1 The traditional concept of curriculum was the standard curriculum which was constructive by so-called experts. The new approach to the curriculum involves the child as well. The child thus becomes an active co-creator of new knowledge. In a traditional curriculum the given syllabus is covered by following a recommended method to be used by the teacher.

   Learner autonomy refers to a student’s ability to set appropriate learning goals and take charge of his or her own learning. However, autonomous learners are dependent upon teachers to create and maintain learning environments that support the development of learner autonomy.

2 Develop communication skills in the second language so that students can use it for social communication outside the classroom.

   Encourage online learning using ICT.
UNIT 3  APPROACHES, METHODS AND TECHNIQUES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

Structure

3.0  Objectives
3.1  Introduction
3.2  The Grammar Translation Method
3.3  The Direct Method
3.4  The Reading Method
3.5  The Behaviourist – Structuralist Paradigm
  3.5.1  The Structural Approach
  3.5.2  The Audio Lingual Method
3.6  Another Paradigm Shift: Communicative Language Teaching
3.7  Communicational Teaching
3.8  The Humanistic Approach
  3.8.1  Community Language Learning
  3.8.2  Total Physical Response
3.9  The Constructivist Paradigm
  3.9.1  Discourse Perspective in Constructivism
  3.9.2  Vygotsky’s Theory of Social Constructivism
3.10  The Post Method Era
3.11  Let Us Sum Up
3.12  Suggested Reading
3.13  Answers

3.0  OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you should be able to:

- understand how different methods have impacted language teaching learning in the 20th and 21st century;
- critically analyse and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each method; and
- use appropriate methods to enhance the teaching-learning process in your classroom.

We have dealt more extensively with some of the methods than others, for example Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as they continue to be used very widely even now.
3.1 INTRODUCTION

Several methods of language teaching learning gained prominence in the twentieth century which are still being followed in the twenty first century. However, the twenty first century has also thrown up certain exciting perspectives. In this Unit, we will further shed light on all these methods, looking at them from the perspective of the learner, the teacher and materials. We will also at the same time ask you to think ‘beyond’ the concept of methods. We wish to state at the outset that we do not promote the efficacy of any one method. We believe that a teacher knows her teaching-learning situation best and should use whatever methods suits her context. But to be able to do this, you need to be aware of the current trends affecting methods of teaching learning and the rationale for them.

‘Language educators have sought to solve the problem of language teaching by focusing attention almost exclusively on method’ (Stern 1983). In other words, they have assumed that if a teacher teaches using the right method, learning will automatically take place. Therefore, over the twentieth century, researchers have been constantly trying to find the ‘best’ method. However, language learners have not really benefitted from these various methods. Scholars are now arguing that perhaps we have been looking in the wrong direction all this while. Probably there are variables besides methods which we need to take into account. Prabhu (1990) proposed that any attempt to find a best method was illogical because the teachers quite reasonably adapted and combined individual methods to suit their classrooms contexts and their own personal beliefs. Applied linguists like Pennycook (1989) suggested that teachers were frustrated because they could not implement any method fully and consistently because their context would not allow it. This search for a ‘best’ method also maintained an unequal relationship between the academics/researchers and the actual teacher who had to engage with her class.

As a result of this sustained criticism, the search for the best method has become less important in the twenty first century and scholars are now talking of a ‘post method’ era where the classroom teacher and her context is given more importance and the teacher herself is encouraged to become a theoretician, theorizing from the classroom.

In the following sections, we shall discuss some of the teaching learning methods that have gained some prominence in the twentieth century and are still in use to a greater or lesser extent in the language classrooms in India.

3.3 THE GRAMMAR TRANSLATION METHOD

The grammar translation method was not based on any theory of language teaching, but its roots can be traced to the way classical languages such as Latin and Greek were taught. It was a way of learning a language through a detailed study of its grammar. The learner then applied the rules of grammar in translating sentences and parts of text from the mother tongue into the target language and vice versa. A distinctive feature of this method was its focus on translating the sentence correctly. Grammatical accuracy was given great importance. Literary texts were the basis of this translation exercise. Vocabulary was taught through bilingual word lists and there was a lot of stress on memorization of words. In short, listening and speaking were neglected and the skills of reading and writing occupied an important place. In this method the teacher was totally dependent on the text as she had to rigidly follow the lesson with no scope for any innovation. The learner’s role was passive; s/he did not play any active role in the use of the language. Look at the example given below:
These are some of the activities that a teacher using the grammar-translation method would use from the reading passage given below.

**Reading passage**

I went out. And in the full blaze of sunlight in the field, stood two dogs, a black-and-white, and a big, bushy, rather handsome sandy-red dog, of the collie type. And sure enough this latter did look queer and a bit horrifying, his whole muzzle set round with white spines, like some ghastly growing; like an unnatural beard.

The black-and-white dog made off as I went through the fence. But the red dog whimpered and hesitated, and moved on hot bricks. He was fat and in good condition. I thought he might belong to some shepherds herding sheep in the forest ranges, among the mountains.

He waited while I went up to him, wagging his tail and whimpering, and ducking his head, and dancing. He daren’t rub his nose with his paws any more; it hurt too much. I patted his head and looked at his nose, and he whimpered loudly.

He must have had thirty quills, or more, sticking out of his nose, all the way round: the white, ugly ends of the quills protruding an inch, sometimes more, sometimes less, from his already swollen, blood-puffed muzzle.

*(From Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine by D. H. Lawrence)*

1. Write the mother tongue equivalents of the following words in paragraph 1: queer, horrifying, ghastly—

2. Translate the following sentences from the passage into the mother tongue.
   i  I went out.
   ii  The black-and-white dog made off as I went through the fence.
   iii I patted his head and looked at his nose, and he whimpered loudly.

3. Pick out the nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs from paragraph 1 and say what kind they are.

**Reflection**

1. Do you as a practicing teacher think that your students would benefit from such activities?

2. Would this help them learn L2?

Language experts of the early nineteen forties discarded the grammar translation method because they felt that learning about language through a detailed study of grammar was not the same as learning to use a language and that constant translation from the mother tongue stood in the way of the learner becoming a fluent user of the target language. However, in recent years, there has been a revival of the grammar—translation tasks, albeit in a modified way. For example, teachers may often ask a pair of students to get a folk tale in their mother tongue. They may be asked to translate it into English and then compare their translation and make modifications where required. Thornbury (2006) recognizes that the grammar translation may have survived due to its ease of implementation, especially with large classes.

### 3.3 THE DIRECT METHOD

As a reaction to the grammar translation method, the direct method emerged in Europe at the end of the 19th century. This method was based on the belief that learning a foreign language is similar to learning L1. This method emerged due to the
needs of late 19th and early 20th century contexts when international business and travel required people to be able to use and communicate in L2. The primary principles that characterize the Direct method are as follows:

1. Classroom interaction was conducted exclusively in the target language;
2. The process of learning was essentially of forming associations, i.e. speech associated with appropriate objects, actions, concepts;
3. Only everyday vocabulary and phrases were taught;
4. Oral communication skills were organized in a graded manner and based on question and answer exchanges between teachers and students in small classes;
5. Repetition was essential if associations had to be formed and reinforced;
6. Grammar was taught inductively;
7. Both listening and speaking were emphasized, and
8. Accuracy of pronunciation and grammar was essential.

Adapted from Richards and Rodgers 2001 and Nagaraj, G. (1996)

The Direct method was demanding of both the learners and the teachers “both had to be highly motivated. This method could be best implemented in schools where the class size was rather small. The method placed the teacher at the centre and the role of the text book was minimized. There were a large list of dos and don’ts for the teacher, for example:

- Never translate: demonstrate
- Never explain: act
- Never imitate mistakes: correct
- Never speak single words: use sentences
- Never speak too much: make students speak

(cited in Titone, 1968:100-101)

This method continues to be popular in the elite private schools in India. However, overuse of this method would be detrimental, because it not only rejects the mother tongue of the learners but also puts heavy demands on the teachers.

This could be a possible activity conducted in the classroom using the Direct method.

Activity

Teacher pointing to a picture of a girl:

Teacher : This is Rita.
She has black hair.
She is wearing a blue dress.

Teacher : Who is she? (Pointing to the picture)
Class : She is Rita.
Teacher : What is the colour of her hair?
Class : It is black.
Teacher : What is the colour of her dress?
Class : It is blue.
Check Your Progress 1

Notes:  
  a) Write your answers in the space given below:
  b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1. Write your own activity using the Direct Method for class nine students.

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3.4 THE READING METHOD

This method was very popular in India soon after independence since English at that time was envisaged to be a library language. Michael West who lived in India for a long time was instrumental in popularizing this method. His new ‘method readers’ emphasized the importance of the reading skill. West believed that silent reading is the key to proficiency and that exercises in reading comprehension would enable proficiency in speech and writing. Vocabulary was seen as an essential component of reading proficiency. This led to the development of the principles of vocabulary control and resulted in the compilation of ‘a general service list of English words’. This was used as standard reference for developing teaching materials and Readers graded on the basis of vocabulary were created. Only the grammar necessary for reading comprehension was taught. The vocabulary of the early reading passages and texts was strictly controlled for difficulty. An attempt was made by the teacher to expand the vocabulary as quickly as possible, since the acquisition of vocabulary was considered more important than the grammatical skills.

English is no longer considered a library language in India. Therefore, the emphasis on the Reading Method can no longer be considered. However the importance of vocabulary has again taken centre stage in English language teaching learning.

Reflection

How do you teach vocabulary in your classroom? Do you teach it as part of the reading comprehension exercise or are there any other dimensions that you consider?

3.5 THE BEHAVIOURIST – STRUCTURALIST PARADIGM

3.5.1 The Structural Approach

About 1940 and later, language experts like Charles Fries applied the principles of behaviourism in psychology and structural linguistics to language teaching. They were of the view that different languages have different ways of expressing the same meaning. These are what we call patterns or structures of the language. In any language, a pattern is made up of words, but in each language, the words are put together in certain specified ways. To be able to use the language, therefore, one needs to know the words and the order in which they occur in that language. To teach a language (English in the present context) a particular pattern or structure is presented and practiced thoroughly before the learner goes on to a new one. Only
when a learner ‘masters’ the individual structures that make up that language, can s/he be expected to come out with an infinite number of new utterances as required by a situation. A learner in this approach is expected to be accurate in whatever s/he says or writes and this grammatical accuracy is to be realized through constant drills and construction of correct (error free) sentences from substitution tables. The aim of such substitution tables is to condition the pupils into using the correct forms of the structure by getting her/him to imitate or produce many examples of the correct form, i.e., repeated reinforcement. In fact, errors were seen as serious aberrations which had to be removed immediately before they became ‘habits’. Errors were considered to be the result of interference from the first language, and were viewed as bad habits which were to be prevented at all costs and eliminated if they occurred. The focus of instruction did not move beyond the sentence level.

Teachers in India continue to be influenced by the structural approach and still use manipulative drills, substitution tables and fill-in-the-blank exercises.

Do you use exercises like the following?

A. Make as many correct sentences as you can from the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>We</th>
<th>They</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>have been</td>
<td>watching TV</td>
<td>doing the assignments</td>
<td>pottering in the garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He</td>
<td>She</td>
<td>has been</td>
<td>painting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>for an hour since 8 o’clock.</td>
<td>cleaning the cupboards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Fill in the blanks with a or an where necessary:

1. Raju hopes to be ———— engineer.
2. He comes ———— home twice ———— week.
3. Draw ———— elephant.
4. He is the son of ———— accountant.

Reflection

Do such exercises serve a useful purpose? What would the students learn from such an exercise? What problems/advantages do you foresee in using such an exercise?

3.5.2 The Audio Lingual Method

The Audio Lingual Method was one of the methods which was based on the Behaviourist – Structuralist Paradigm. Towards the end of World War-II, the US armed forces needed to learn foreign languages on a large scale as US soldiers needed to communicate with both their allies as well as the enemy countries where they had been deployed. The languages taught ranged from European languages such as French and German to East Asian languages such as Japanese and Korean.
This method focused on oral/aural work and pronunciation taught through drills as well as dialogue practice in small groups of motivated learners and native language teachers. Dialogues were the main aspect of the audio-lingual approach as they provided the learners an opportunity to mimic/imitate, practice and memorise bits of language considered to be relevant to their situations. In fact, the Audio lingual method adapted many strategies of the Direct method, especially the emphasis on the spoken skill. Based on the principle that language learning is habit formation, the method encourages imitation and memorization of set phrases. Structures are taught one at a time using drills. Little or no grammatical explanation is provided. Vocabulary is limited and taught in context. There is use of language laboratories, tapes and visuals. Teaching points are often determined by the differences and similarities between L1 and L2, with an emphasis on the differences. Successful responses are reinforced; great care is taken to discourage errors, as it is felt they lead to bad habits. Great emphasis is given to native-like pronunciation.

Read the following conversation. The verbs in bold are in the simple past tense:

Priya: Did you go somewhere last week?
Venkat: Yes, I did.

Priya: Did you have a good time?
Venkat: Yes, I did. I had a very good time.

Priya: What time did you get home?
Venkat: My flight got in a little after eleven.

Check Your Progress 1

Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below:

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1. Suggest the five key words which describe the Behaviourist model.

2. Explain the main features of language learning through the structural approach.

3. Write any two main features of the Audio Lingual method of language teaching.
Communicative language teaching (CLT) emerged in Europe and in the USA in the 1970s. This has been the dominant paradigm for several years in all the different contexts where English is taught. It continues to be the major teaching methodology in the Indian context even now.

The origin of CLT can be traced to the changing view of language which veers away from language structure towards language functions and communications (Hall, 2011). Thus language teaching moved away from individual linguistic structures to teaching people how to use language effectively when communicating. In other words, it moved from linguistic competence to communicative competence (Hymes, 1972). Communicative competence essentially suggests that forming grammatically correct sentence by the learners is not enough, they should be able to use language appropriately in a variety of settings and situations and with different types of interlocutors.

For example, linguists pointed out the hiatus that exists between form and functions of utterances. For example, how will you understand the utterance – ‘Why don’t you close the door?’ What kind of a sentence is this in grammatical terms? What meaning does this utterance convey? Is it a question or a request? Is it about asking someone to shut the door or asking someone why they are not shutting the door?

To quote Littlewood, “… from a structural viewpoint the sentence is unambiguously an interrogative, from a functional viewpoint, however, it is ambiguous. In some circumstances, it may function as a question. For example, the speaker may genuinely wish to know why his companion never closes a certain door. In others, it may function as a command – this would probably be the case if a teacher addresses it to a pupil who had left the classroom door open. In yet another situation, it would be interpreted as “a plea, a suggestion or a complaint”.

In other words, whereas the sentence structure is stable and straightforward, its communicative function is variable and depends on specific situational and social factors. A second language learner may not be able to interpret or judge the intention of a speaker and would need to be taught.

The key word in CLT is ‘learner centred’ and activities should be planned in such a manner where active learner participation is essential. Unlike other approaches where the learner has a passive role, here the learner is the active agent and negotiator who must contribute as much as s/he gains in a cooperative atmosphere. Hence, there is a great emphasis on pair work and group work. The teacher’s role also changes to that of a facilitator, organizer, guide, monitor, manager and counselor. The teacher has to facilitate the communication process between the learners, the text and the various activities which the student and the teachers must participate in together.

The communicative approach to language teaching also ushered in an era of fluency over accuracy and the teacher was expected to stress more on the ‘meaning of a message conveyed’ rather than on the ‘grammatical correctness of the utterance’.
In the initial stages the syllabus based on CLT concentrated on the notional functional syllabus. However, the focus later became more eclectic. There were primarily three types of materials used: 1 - text based, 2 - task based and 3) realia (authentic material). The textbooks produced according to CLT in the Indian context have been varied. Many of them have followed the traditional ‘structural’ syllabus but included tasks which include games, role plays, information gap, problem solving and so on. Many of the books have also been divided around themes which are close to the student’s world, such as - my family, school, holidays, travel, culture, environment and so on. Realia has also been included as part of CLT, i.e. posters, advertisement, maps, train schedule, graphs. The tasks set have a specific communicative purpose and train the learners to be fluent as well as accurate, although CLT has tended to emphasize fluency over accuracy.

Example of a problem solving activity:

In the passage below, two paragraphs are jumbled up. Can you separate them again into two paragraphs?

Once there lived a cruel wolf in a town. One day a king saw an old man planting small mango plants. He asked him, “When will you get any fruit from these plants?” Saint Francis visited the town and wanted to see the wolf. The king laughed and said “You’ll die before the trees bear fruit.” People told him that he would be killed. But the saint would not listen. The old man smiled and said “Yes, but others will eat the fruit. Now, I am eating the fruit from the trees which my grandfather planted.” He went into the forest. When the wolf ran towards him, he said “Come here Brother Wolf”. The king was ashamed. The cruel wolf closed its mouth and sat down at his feet.

Example of Gap filling activity

Ramesh Sinha is 12 Years old. He was born on 10th May 2001. His father Rakesh Sinha is a doctor. They live at No. 10, Kutab Institutional Area, Delhi. Ramesh studies in Adarsh Vidyalaya. He plays cricket and chess. His hobbies include painting and coin collection. Ramesh wants to join the local children’s club. Could you help him fill in the application form below?

The Kutab Children’s Club

Name:
Age:
Date of Birth:
Father’s Name:
Father’s Occupation:
Mother’s Name:
Mother’s Occupation:
Address:
Name of School:
Hobbies:
Any Special Interest:

(The teacher could get photocopies of authentic forms and ask the children to fill them).
However, all methods are subject to criticism, and from the 80’s itself there was a questioning of CLT. Brumfit (1984) for example, questioned the over emphasis on fluency at the cost of accuracy. Towards the late eighties there was again an emphasis on grammar teaching and vocabulary acquisition which had been relegated to the background in the early years of CLT. Additionally, the so-called authenticity of communicative activities was questioned. Widdowson (1998) for example questioned the authenticity of tasks such as giving directions in a classroom context, suggesting that such pair work activities cannot be termed genuine, taken away as it were from the context in which it is required. Moreover, it was suggested that CLT was not appropriate for all cultures and contexts. For example, pair work, group work, and less teacher intervention may not be suitable in more traditional cultures where there are certain expectations from a teacher.

Check Your Progress 1

Notes:  

a) Write your answers in the space given below:

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1. How is ‘linguistic competence’ different from ‘communicative competence’? Explain with examples.

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2. Why did communicative language teaching not produce the results it was expected to?

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3.7 COMMUNICA TIONAL TEACHING

Communicational teaching refers to a five-year project of exploratory teaching of English as a second language which was ‘planned, carried out and reviewed regularly by a group of interested teacher trainers and teachers of English as a part-time activity but with institutional support from the Regional Institute of English, Bangalore and the British Council in Madras (now Chennai) from 1979 to 1984’ (Prabhu 1987). The origin of this project was ‘A strongly-felt pedagogic intuition that the development of competence in a second language requires not systematization of linguistic inputs or maximization of planned practice, but rather the creation of conditions in which learners engage in an effort to cope with communication.’ This project and its findings caused a lot of excitement all over the world and while it has not been formalized into an approach, it greatly influenced other approaches, especially the Task based approach to language teaching.
Some features of the communicational teaching

- It was a reaction against the structural-oral-situation method that was predominant at the time where the focus was on structure and its repetition.
- Problem-solving activities or tasks were the main thrust of the teaching-learning process. The communicational syllabus was not based on pre-selected language items but driven by the difficulty level of the tasks.
- The tasks provided ‘meaning-focused’ activity that required students to understand and convey meaning and where attention to language forms was incidental. These tasks were primarily cognitive in nature.
- In dealing with the class, the teacher controlled her language just as any adult would do when speaking to a child. This is called ‘natural control’.
- In communicational teaching the learner has to engage with more than one language that may be required for problem-solving activities. Hence the use of mother tongue or other languages were not prohibited.

Sample task

Given below are a few of the tasks used during the project:

CTP Lesson: 30 January 1981

Standard VIII

The following is written on the blackboard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mr. George</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.15 am</td>
<td>Leaves home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.45 am</td>
<td>Arrives at his office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.45 am</td>
<td>Goes to the court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.30 pm</td>
<td>Returns to his office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.30 pm</td>
<td>Leaves the office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.00 pm</td>
<td>Arrives home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mrs. George</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.45 am</td>
<td>Leaves home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.00 am</td>
<td>Arrives at the college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.30 pm</td>
<td>Leaves the college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.45 pm</td>
<td>Arrives home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.45 pm</td>
<td>Leaves home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00 pm</td>
<td>Arrives at the college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.30 pm</td>
<td>Leaves the college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.45 pm</td>
<td>Arrives home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pre-task: Questions which are deliberately varied in form are as follows:

1. Where is Mr. George at 10.00 am?
2. Who leaves home first in the morning?
3. When does Mrs. George arrive at the college, in the afternoon?
4. How long does Mrs. George take to go from her house to the college?
5. Who is at home at 1.00pm?
6. How much time does Mr. George spend at his office, in the morning?

Task:

1. Who comes home last, in the evening?
2. Where is Mrs. George at 1.30 pm?
3. How much time does Mrs. George spend at the college, in the morning?
4. When does Mrs. George leave the college in the afternoon?
5. Who is at home at 9.30 pm?
6. Where is Mr. George at 4.30 pm?
7. How long does Mr. George spend at his office in the afternoon?
8. Who does not come home for lunch?

Pre-task is guided by the teacher. It is a whole class activity. The pre-task activity is meant to orient the learner for the task based activity, which means the learner is expected to do the task by herself.

(Nagaraj, 1996, pp 92 -93)

### 3.8 THE HUMANISTIC APPROACH

The Humanistic movement in language teaching emerged, as did some of the other approaches, from developments which occurred in education and psychology. The ideational basis of humanistic education was developed by authors such as Maslow (1970) and Rogers (1961). In terms of acquisition of L2, this approach argued even more strongly against the authoritarian teacher-centred classroom and emphasized the importance of creating environments which minimized anxiety, enhanced personal security and promoted genuine interest through a deeper engagement of the learner’s whole self (Roberts, 1975). Unlike the Communicative approach which to a large extent remained syllabus-centred, the Humanistic approach permitted students to diagnose their own needs and create their syllabus. The key concerns of this paradigm shift included factors such as the following:

- Respect for learners as people, being sensitive to their feelings and encouraging respect for each other. The affective nature of the learning experience was emphasized.

- Respect for the learners own knowledge and independence, and faith that learners know best how and when to learn. The classroom activities focused on what the learners wished to engage in. This contributed to learner autonomy and critical thinking skills as well as encouraged self-discovery.
Responsibility and respect for the need for criticism and correction.

Teachers were regarded as enablers and facilitators who assisted the learners in their process of self-discovery rather than instructors that transmit knowledge to learners.

The ways in which these psychological and educational principles can be implemented in second language teaching learning was explored and tried out by four language teaching methods. These include ‘Asher’s Total Physical Response, Curran’s Community Language Learning, Gattegno’s Silent Way, and Lozanov’s Suggestopedia.’ We shall discuss briefly two of these methods which will bring out the ways in which the basic principles of humanism can be realized in the classroom.

3.8.1 Community Language Learning

Charles Curran, who was the originator of community language learning (CLL), was a catholic priest who taught psychology and counseling. His approach to teaching L2 is heavily influenced by the methods of counseling therapy. In a CLL class, learners typically sit in a circle and talk naturally about the subject which is of personal relevance to them. The learners may speak either in the first language L1 or in the L2. The teacher stands behind the learner who is speaking and either gives the L2 translation of what the learner has said in L1, or reformulates the learner’s L2 utterance correctly and appropriately. The learner then repeats what the teacher says and so that class moves on from one learner to the other in a similar fashion. The conversations are recorded and replayed at the end of the class. The whole purpose being to help the children analyse the contents and learn from the experience.

A CLL class thus had no preset syllabus; the language content was derived directly from the interests and concerns of the learners themselves. The teacher had two roles: first was that of the resource person who helps the learner to formulate the L2 message that they wish to convey. The second was to create a supportive and non-judgmental, anxiety free atmosphere in the classroom.

Most institutional settings such as schools and colleges find such an approach much too democratic to follow. However, many language programmes have drawn upon its principles such as the emphasis on learner-centeredness, group work, learner autonomy and the facilitative role of the teacher.

3.8.2 Total Physical Response

This method was evolved by James Asher, an experimental psychologist who theorized that the acquisition of L2 is very similar to L1. Since young children acquire their first language largely in the form of commands or encouragement to act (‘sit down’ ‘finish your dinner’) the acquisition of L2 should follow a similar pattern through commands that require a physical response. Central to TPR is the notion that all language learning (including L1 and L2) can be presented through commands and physical actions.

TPR did not become a fully implemented method within ELT. However, teachers might draw on it from time to time especially when teaching young learners. This method can be offered at the beginner level but may not appeal to learners at an advance level.
Check Your Progress 4

Notes:  a) Write your answers in the space given below:

    b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1. Describe the salient features of the Humanistic approach to language teaching.

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3.9 THE CONSTRUCTIVIST PARADIGM

The National Curriculum Framework 2005 (NCF 2005) envisioned the aim and methodology of teaching learning as the process of construction of knowledge by the child. Every experience of life adds to the previous knowledge and helps to create and develop new ideas. Thus in constructivist methodology the teaching learning environment should be designed to support the learners’ knowledge construction process. Wilson 1996 defines a constructivist learning environment as “a place where learners may work together and support each other as they use a variety of tools and information sources in their guided, pursuit of learning goals and problem solving activities”. He calls it a learning environment rather than an instructional environment because in a constructivist setting learning rather than teaching is emphasized. Designers of the constructivist learning environment emphasis the following seven pedagogical goals:

1. Provide experiences with the knowledge of what is a constructivist process;
2. Provide experiences and appreciation for multiple perspectives;
3. Embed learning in realistic and relevant contexts;
4. Encourage ownership and voice in the learning process;
5. Embed learning in social experiences;
6. Encourage use of multiple mode of representation. For example, written and spoken modes as well as films, projects, experimentation and so on; and
7. Encourage self awareness of knowledge of construction process.

_Cunnigham et al 1993_

For the proper facilitation of knowledge construction, a teacher should create an interactive environment between students and teachers and between the students themselves. This can happen when students are engaged in collaborative activities which involve leadership, negotiation and cooperation thus encouraging an authentic way of learning. At the same time, students should be encouraged to make optimal use of what they know and be individual in their thinking process.

A good example of this could be role play where students take on the roles of characters in a book, famous historical figures, body parts and plant parts. In this way, they will understand the depth and importance of these perspectives.
3.9.1 Discourse Perspective in Constructivism

Anandan (2012) strongly feels that since language exists only in the form of discourses, our focus should be on enabling children to construct discourse, both orally as well as in the written form. This is possible only through providing authentic linguistic experience to children through discourses.

Discourse oriented pedagogy necessitates redefining curricular objectives in terms of discourses and not in terms of structures. For example, grammar teaching and teaching of writing are not separate skills but are inextricably linked to the students' own writing. Using the students' own writing as a text, teachers using the constructivist approach teach grammar using one or a combination of the following methods: mini-lessons, grammar journals, one-to-one conferences and peer group activities. We shall briefly discuss each of these methods.

Mini-lessons arise from student written work and are designed to be very brief, say 5 to 10 minutes. For example, if a teacher has noticed certain problematic sentences from students’ essays, rather than refer to textbook exercises to address the issue, she may select sentences from the students’ work and use those sentences as a way to promote discussion about the stylistic choices that students make. Note the strategy emphasises stylistic choices rather than right or wrong answers, therefore, it gives students an opportunity to discuss their own writing as well as that of their peers. It sharpens their critical skills as they must consider whether their sentences work or don’t work effectively. The goal is to have the students work on 2 or 3 sentences every day, hence the term ‘mini-lesson’.

A Grammar Journal is a notebook in which students keep a record of ungrammatical sentences they have written. Teachers often guide the students to these errors but do not correct them. Students rewrite these sentences, making alternative stylistic choices to improve each sentence. During the one-to-one conference, the teachers discuss the editing choices and monitor the student’s progress (Gupta 2012, pp159-160).

The following section would give you an idea about a typical lesson which follows the discourse perspective.

The Unit is titled “The Voice of the Voiceless”.

The issue of discrimination is presented using a number of discourses like cartoon, newspaper report, profile, story and poem.

We present here a lesson transaction using the news reports.

Reading the news reports:

Process-reading

Let the learners go through the news reports individually.

Ask one or two learners to present the ideas they have conceived from the reports.

Divide the class into 5/6 member groups.

Assign each piece of news to two groups and ask them to read it again.

Interact with the groups and help them with their reading (by asking them to refer to the glossary, asking probing questions, etc.)
You may ask questions such as:

What is the report about?
Where did it happen?
Who were involved in it?

Let the groups present what they have understood from the news reports.

Let there be a brief discussion on the atrocities against the weaker sections of the society based on the newspaper reports.

Ask the learners to present instances of such atrocities against the weaker sections of the society in their neighbourhood.

Let the groups collect as many reports and photos as possible in English or any other language from newspapers and magazines.

Let them categories those issues under five or six heads.

Let all groups compile a ‘magazine’, each using the collection of newspaper reports and photos based on different issues.

Based on all the issues, let them fill in the table given in the text.

Assessing the data entered in the table, the learners may prepare a brief report.

(Activity taken from English Sourcebook (p.45), Standard-7, Government of Kerala, SCERT, 2008)

In this paradigm, it is expected that the teachers fix goals together with students, asking them what they need and want to achieve and the different discourse domains and skills. This methodology avoids the linear mode of presenting language elements to learners whether in terms of structural grading or lexical grading or even in terms of functions and notions. Instead, the text book is now worked out in terms of gradation of discourses. For example, diary as a discourse is introduced in class four and autobiographical writing at the secondary level.

Check Your Progress 5

Notes:  a) Write your answers in the space given below:

       b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1. Create a classroom activity using the discourse perspective for class IX students.

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3.9.2 Vygotsky’s Theory of Social Constructivism

Social Constructivism was developed by the Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky. Vygotsky, although himself a cognitivist, believed that it was not possible to separate learning from its social context. He firmly asserted that learning was not simply the assimilation and accommodation of new knowledge by the learners. Instead,
he argued that all cognitive functions originate in social interactions. Therefore, the active learner not only links new knowledge to prior knowledge, but also applies it to understand authentic situations.

Vygotsky’s main interest was in the study of language development. Learning for him occurred through dialogue which took place between the teacher and the learners, between the learners themselves and between the learner and the text. Vygotsky believed that learners made sense of new knowledge through an internal or intermental dialogue. Thus learning was interacting in a social setting as well as reconstructing ideas in one’s own mind and sharing them with others. Language was used by the learner to organize thought, to learn as well as to communicate and share experiences. In other words, language enabled a child to imagine, create, manipulate and use new ideas and share them with other people. Parents and teachers provided learners with new vocabulary in terms of words, phrases and chunks along with the structures of language. Children jointly reconstructed experiences which provided guided support to each other, hence furthering their learning. While working with others, in groups or in pairs, the children brought about developmental change not only in themselves but also in others.

Some of the major tenets developed by Vygotsky was the **Zone of Proximal Development** and the **Level of Actual Development**. The area in which an individual’s optimum learning can occur is called the **Zone of Proximal Development**. The **Level of Actual Development** is the level of development that learners’ have already reached, and can attempt any activity independent of any help. Vygotsky conceptualized ZPD and recognized that learners were able to reach beyond their capacity if they were guided and given prompts by someone more advanced. They needed to be scaffolded until they gained confidence to work independently.

Since the basis of constructivism is learner centredness where the learner is actively engaged in the construction of knowledge, a set of language learning strategies are implemented by the learner. Some of the strategies which have gained prominence in recent years are Critical Thinking and Reflective Learning.

**Critical thinking** is that mode of thinking — about any subject, content, or problem — in which the thinker improves the quality of his or her thinking by skillfully analyzing, assessing, and reconstructing it. Critical thinking is self-directed, self-disciplined, self-monitored, and self-corrective thinking. It produces learners who are bright and innovative and likely to succeed in the academic and other spheres of life. According to Halpern (1996), Critical thinking is purposeful, reasoned and goal directed. It involves problem solving, making inferences, predicting and using skills which involve inferencing in specific contexts. Critical thinking is also sometimes called directed thinking because it focuses on the desired outcome. In order to be critical thinkers, we must encourage our students to assess the validity of statements, news stories, arguments and so on. Therefore, using the material and class room activities, the teacher should help the learner develop critical thinking skill. This would involve:

1. the ability to identify and interpret information, facts, opinions, intentions in any reading / writing material.
2. employ contextual clues to analyse the meaning of sentences and words.
3. express personal response to description of experiences using reasoned judgement.
Reflective Learning is a part of critical thinking which refers to the process of analyzing and making judgements of what has happened. Reflective learning helps learners to develop higher order thinking skills by inducing them to relate new knowledge to prior understanding. It enables them to think in both abstract and conceptual terms, applying specific strategies to novel tasks. The reflective learner must understand their own thinking and learning strategies. If a teacher must give scope for reflective learning to her learners, she must provide enough wait time to the learners when they are asked a question. She must provide a emotionally supportive and non-threatening environment in the classroom. In a reflective classroom, the teachers ask questions which require reason and evidence providing some help / explanation to guide the learners’ thoughts during exploration. In a reflective socioconstructivist classroom there is a lot of peer/group work which help learners to see the other’s point of view. This helps learners to become sensitive to the people and issues around them.

Check Your Progress 5

2. What was the main emphasis of the Social Constructivist Approach and how did it differ from other constructivists?

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3.10 THE POST METHOD ERA

For over a century, ‘language educators sought to solve the problems of language teaching by focusing attention almost exclusively on Method’ (Stern, 1983:452). Traditionally it was believed that if we followed the right set of teaching principles it would lead to the most effective learning outcomes. However, this thinking has been questioned in recent times as we have witnessed the rise and fall of several methods throughout the recent history of language teaching learning (Brown, 2002). Hence, now there is disillusionment with ‘methods’ as a problem solver for the teaching learning problem. In this ‘post methods era’, attention has shifted from method to pedagogy, i.e. to the teaching learning processes and the contribution of the teacher to this process. Brown (2002) discusses some of the reasons for the decline of what he calls the “method syndrome”:

- There cannot be an all –purpose ‘designer method’ that will work for all the disparate contexts where L2 is taught
- It leads to an unequal power relationship between ELT academics and researchers on the one hand and teachers in the classroom on the other hand, as she merely has to apply the method which is in a sense given to her. It is forgotten that it is the teacher in the classroom who best understands her students and their contexts.
**Methods** suggests a static set of procedures while **Pedagogy** suggests a dynamic interplay between learners, teachers, and the instructional materials during the process of teaching learning.

Kumaravadivelu (2003) noted that in the initial form, post method practice may be termed as: principled eclecticism in which the teachers plan and adapt their classroom procedure by absorbing practice from a variety of methods. However, while this is how most classes are actually taught, the post method discourse has developed further via three principles: Particularity, Practicality and Possibility (Kumaravadivelu, 2006 page: 59).

These principles are as follows:

**Particularity:** Teachers have to take into account the social, linguistic and culture background of their learners.

**Practicality:** The teachers are encouraged to theorize from their own practices from their classrooms and put into practice their own theories. This gives them autonomy and self respect.

**Possibility:** The socio political consciousness of learners is addressed in the classroom ‘as a catalyst for identity formation and social transformation’.

Brown (2002) suggests that a teacher must prepare a checklist of questions in the dynamic process of teaching learning:

1. Does the technique appeal to the genuine interests of your students? Is it relevant to their lives?
2. Is the technique presented in a positive, enthusiastic manner?
3. Are students clearly aware of the purpose of the technique?
4. Do students have some choice in: (a) choosing some aspect of the technique? And/or (b) determining how they go about fulfilling the goals of the technique?
5. Does the technique encourage students to discover for themselves certain principles or rules (rather than simply being “told”)?
6. Does it encourage students in some way to develop or use effective strategies of learning and communication?
7. Does it contribute – at least to some extent – to students’ ultimate autonomy and independence (from you)?
8. Does it foster cooperative negotiation with other students in the class? Is it a truly interactive technique?
9. Does the technique present a “reasonable challenge”?
10. Do students receive sufficient feedback on their performance (from each other or from you)?

(Brown, 2002, p.15)

**Check Your Progress 6**

**Notes:**

a) Write your answers in the space given below:

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1. What is the difference between method and pedagogy?
3.11 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we discussed the various methods which have attempted to solve the teaching learning problems in recent times with little success. We discussed the fact that there has been a preoccupation with the search for the best ‘method’ which would serve as a panacea for all the problems of teaching learning of L2. In the current scenario there has been a major shift from the obsession with method to the stress on pedagogy. This was primarily because the concept of ‘method’ was too prescriptive, assuming knowledge of contexts in a top-down fashion. The shift to language pedagogy is much more dynamic involving an interplay between the teachers, learners, the instructional material as well as the curricular objectives.

3.12 SUGGESTED READING


### 3.13 ANSWERS

**Check Your Progress-2**

1. ● Stimulus - response
   - Imitation
   - Repetition
   - Reinforcement
   - Habit formation

2. ● A particular language pattern or structure is presented and practiced thoroughly before the learner goes on to a new one.
   - Grammatical accuracy is emphasized which is realized through constant drills and construction of correct (error free) sentences from substitution tables.
   - Errors are seen as serious aberrations
   - The focus of instruction does not move beyond the sentence level.

3. ● Audio Lingual method focused on oral/aural work and pronunciation was taught through drills as well as dialogue practice.
Dialogues were the main aspect of the audio-lingual approach as they provided the learners an opportunity to mimic/imitate, practice and memorise bits of language considered to be relevant to their situations.

Check your Progress-3

1. ‘Linguistic Competence’ refers to the mastery of grammatical rules and structures of the language. ‘Communicative Competence’, on the other hand, refers to the ability to understand the appropriateness of the social context in which utterances are produced and exchanged. It also involves the ability to produce socially appropriate utterances.

2. • CLT over emphasised on fluency at the cost of accuracy.
   • Authenticity of communicative activities was questioned.
   • CLT was not appropriate for all cultures and contexts.

Check Your Progress-4

1. • Respect for learners as people, being sensitive to their feelings and encouraging respect for each other. The affective nature of the learning experience was underscored.
   • Respect for the learners own knowledge and independence, and faith that learners know best how and when to learn. The classroom activities focused on what the learners wished to engage in. This contributed to learner autonomy and critical thinking skills as well as encouraged self-discovery.
   • Responsibility and respect for the need for criticism and correction.
   • Teachers were regarded as enablers and facilitators who assisted the learners in their process of self-discovery rather than instructors that transmit knowledge to learners.

Check Your Progress-5

2 • Emphasis on social interaction
   • knowledge construction to be built through a social activity
   • other constructivist approaches primacy given to the individual and knowledge construction at an individual level.

Check Your Progress-6

1. • There cannot be an all-purpose ‘designer method’ that will work for all the disparate contexts where L2 is taught
   • It leads to an unequal power relationship between ELT academics and researchers on the one hand and teachers in the classroom on the other hand, as she merely has to apply the method which is in a sense given to her. It is forgotten that it is the teacher in the classroom who best understands her students and their contexts.
   • Methods suggests a static set of procedures while Pedagogy suggests a dynamic interplay between learners, teachers, and the instructional materials during the process of teaching learning.
UNIT 4    DAILY LESSON PLANS AND STRATEGIES FOR CLASSROOM TRANSACTION

Structure

4.0 Objectives

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Key Features of Language Lessons
   4.2.1 The subject matter of English courses
   4.2.2 Transactions in the classroom setting

4.3 Planning at the Level of the Teacher

4.4 The Importance of Lesson Planning
   4.4.1 Planning a Lesson
   4.4.2 Choosing a Lesson Plan Format
   4.4.3 Lesson Planning: Using Into, Through and Beyond
   4.4.4 Hints for Effective Lesson Planning

4.5 Sample Lesson Plans
   4.5.1 Writing for Newspapers
   4.5.2 Listening and Speaking
   4.5.3 Beginning Reading
   4.5.4 Creative Writing
   4.5.5 Strategies in the Classroom
   4.5.6 Classroom Management

4.6 Let Us Sum Up

4.7 Suggested Readings

4.8 Answers

4.2 OBJECTIVES

This unit deals with teaching-learning in the classroom setting where curriculum transaction is primarily located. The teacher takes the lead in generating learning experiences for the student. After going through this Unit, you should be able to:

- develop an awareness and appreciation of the nature of learning experiences that can be generated in classrooms;
- differentiate between ‘teaching’ a body of content and ‘facilitating skill development’;
- appreciate and identify learner diversity as a positive learning resource;
- promote participation of students as partnership with the teacher in the teaching-learning process; and
- understand the nature of planning for English lessons.
- understand the importance of lesson planning;
- recognise the features of an effective lesson plan;
-
• review some sample lesson plans;
• explain the principle behind integrated lesson plans;
• use some new strategies in the classroom;
• understand some principles of classroom management;

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In any teaching-learning programme, two complementary aspects are working simultaneously. First, the pre-designed and pre-determined inputs which is associated with a prescribed syllabus and text book(s) and then the dynamic and unpredictable process of implementing such a broad scheme in a unique setting. These unique and ‘real’ settings are the classrooms in which particular groups of learners guided by their teachers’ ‘lesson plans’ as well as other inputs from them, participate in activities in ways which suit their individual styles. In fact, the teacher’s job is to adapt what is provided to her as a ‘given’ i.e. the syllabus and course book to the local situation—the characteristics of the particular student in a class.

Teachers all over the world, teaching at any level, or teaching any subject, are aware that they cannot walk into a classroom without a teaching plan in mind. This is relevant to the nursery class and also the college lecturer. Ralph Tyler one of the early educationists stated that it was necessary to have lesson plans for the “effective organization of educational experiences to achieve the educational purpose of the school”.

The days when a teacher could teach without a lesson plan have long since disappeared. In the 21st century the teacher requires a deep knowledge of a variety of issues. A professional approach implies that the teacher’s energy is channelled into planning and setting expectations, targeting key elements which will make a difference to their pupils and the results that they are able to achieve. In essence lesson planning is: “an opportunity to formalise the process that effective teachers undertake, in some form or another everyday”.

In this unit, our main aim is to help you gain an appreciation of both aspects of teaching learning process, i.e. the support that you receive from a pre-arranged syllabus and the unpredictable implementation of this syllabus to a discrete set of learners.

4.2 KEY FEATURES OF LANGUAGE LESSONS

For millions of school children (with practically no contact with English in the home and neighbourhood), English lessons in classrooms will be the only means of learning the language. So making English lessons effective for all is a challenge. Let us try now to find out how the objectives and pedagogic approach of English course(s) help learning in the classroom.

4.2.1 The Subject Matter of English Courses

A distinction is generally made in the overall school syllabus between skill oriented subjects like language and content oriented subjects. Obviously these are not neat and watertight compartments, but there is an important difference. The syllabus for content subjects (math, environmental studies etc.) lists a number of topics which represent a body of knowledge. This is made up of information, technical terms, concepts and principles associated with the subject, which is often a field of specialization at the university level. The main objective of instruction is to help
students gain both knowledge of facts and terminology and understanding of concepts and principles. The central objective of teaching language (especially English taught as a second or foreign language) is different. It is for the student to gain the ability to use language for communication – to express ideas in speech and writing and understand what is in spoken and written texts. English language course books have traditionally had an anthology structure. Here, the anchor of the typical unit is a prose passage or a poem. Most of the exercises are linked to these texts: they deal with the ideas (under ‘comprehension’) and the language forms illustrated in them. We need to be clear about the function of these texts in a language course. It is essentially to provide samples of the language in use which in turn facilitates exposure to or contact with the language. Materials developers follow principles of curriculum design when selecting and ordering these texts, as we will see in later units. The texts illustrate language forms (words, grammatical structures, spelling, etc.) using the content (themes) as a medium. The structure of the language (rules of grammar, spelling, word formation, pronunciation) have to be learnt, but not in a formal way. Such formal descriptive knowledge relating to the language is the main learning objective of a student of linguistics. However, it is important for a teacher of English to have the knowledge of the structure of English. But the learner in class IV or VII needs to learn these rules in a different way. They should be able to apply them when using the language, rather than just know them. All the technical information related to them is not needed. So we have to be careful not to make the English lesson look too much like a linguistics lesson. A helpful distinction to keep in mind is that between learning to use language and learning about language.

Similarly, we need to be clear about the role of the specific content (information and ideas) in the texts. Each text has to be understood by the student (reader), just as a listener needs to understand what a speaker says to her. As the student tries to understand the text, some help (clue or explanation) from the teacher is often necessary. But after the text has been understood to some degree, the specific details are no longer of relevance for language learning. These ideas (relating to the discovery of penicillin, migration of birds, customs of some community, incidents and characters in a story, and so on) serve mainly as illustrations of language in use. The widening of the student’s general knowledge is useful as a bonus, but it is not the primary aim. What is learnt about the way language forms convey meaning in the text is more important. This knowledge becomes a resource for understanding and for producing texts. Unfortunately, as we know, the content of these texts in language has been a major focus. A large proportion of examination questions simply ask for memorized information from them. Students get high marks for remembering details from these texts. This focus changes English into a content subject, which it certainly is not. In a history or chemistry or biology course the content (specific ideas) in the textbook are/is central, and teaching and testing focus on this body of knowledge. This is what makes a content subject fundamentally different from a skill subject like language. So we need to keep the purpose for which texts are included in mind, when using them as a resource for language learning.

Language is learnt most successfully by experiencing its use. This does not mean that learners have to talk and write (produce complex texts) most of the time. What it means is that during lessons they should get opportunities to experience language in use – exposure to texts that need to be understood and situations where ideas need to be expressed in texts they produce. A major part of the experiences in the language class should be similar to those of the child acquiring a language naturally through exposure to its use in everyday communication. A point to note here is that the child usually experiences only spoken language in use in the world outside, while the child in class deals more with the written language found in books.
4.2.2 Transactions in the Classroom Setting

We see now that the main teaching objective guiding English lessons should be to provide experiences of *using language* to learners. We need to exploit the range of language texts given in the course books in a manner that provides these experiences. The English teacher has certain advantages over the subject teacher when dealing with the textbook. The typical English textbook contains a wide range of texts (stories, poems, plays, essays, comic strips, cartoons, posters, advertisements, etc.). When selecting these, the interests of children of the given age are an important consideration. Some principle of gradation is applied in deciding the sequence of units, but the book does *not* have to be followed strictly page by page. Jumping ahead to pick up something from a later unit because it seems especially interesting and relevant at some point is possible and indeed desirable (Unusual current events prominent in the media could be the reason: medals at the Olympics, an invention, a spacecraft reaching Mars, some curious incident involving animals, etc.). What is in the book can be supplemented or even replaced by some other text. A text which is seen as interesting can be taken up for some purpose even if it has a new grammatical form or a couple of difficult words. These language items do not have to be taught (and finished) immediately. They will appear over and over again in the same year and in the curriculum of higher classes. The flexibility in choosing the text and related activity allows the teacher to give priority to students’ *getting involved* in the tasks.

Compared with this, the teacher of a content subject (who also has well designed textbooks as support) has to work with many restrictions. The given sequence of topics/sub-topics has to be followed. Extra material if used must help to illustrate and explain a difficult concept. There is less scope for going in different directions. In the language class, on the other hand, it is the activity that matters, and any text (whatever the topic) that students are likely to engage with is acceptable.

A second advantage that the English teacher enjoys when using language texts in class is related to the way in which they are to be treated. Obviously students should understand what is in the texts whether it is written passages and now increasingly, recorded spoken texts. But it is not necessary to aim for complete *comprehension* immediately. After some sense of the overall nature and message has been gained, many questions for discussion can be raised. Who created it? Who is the sender/author? Who is it addressed to? Why was it created? When? Where? Could the same ‘message’ have been conveyed in some other way(s)? Will other ‘receivers’ respond in the same way? Students themselves might suggest some of the questions. These are the open-ended questions facilitating *discussion* that we noted above. Creating an interest in going back to the text to understand it better, should also be among the teacher’s aim. Discussion based on such questions on different texts would lead students to pay attention to words, grammatical elements, and also gradually to organization and style.

Another advantage of English lessons lies in the space for open ended questions and tasks, many of which do not lead to single correct answers. Such tasks can *take off* from the texts: dramatization, role play, expressing some aspects in a picture or cartoon, imagining different endings for stories, finding or remembering other very similar or dissimilar texts. They provide learners with opportunities to use language, and many are suitable for pair/group work. The absence of right answers allows students to engage with tasks following their own interests, attitudes and styles—which is important for their motivation and morale.

The general principle for language instruction that emerges from this discussion is, that the language lesson should provide for a variety of open-ended tasks demanding
attention and effort from all the pupils. There should also be some measure of interaction or communication among them. Of course the use of English is to be encouraged, but the occasional use of the L1 is not in any way undesirable. However, the use of this support should gradually be decreased. This will happen naturally as the ability to use English increases. As noted earlier, presentation and explanation by the teacher (to which pupils listen) should be only one of the strands in lessons. Learner activity should be a planned and major lesson component, and not merely something to be taken up (time permitting) after the teacher has finished her part. But learner activity is not an end itself. It has to be planned (‘when’ and ‘how’) so that relevant learning experiences are generated. Simply reducing ‘teacher talk’ will not automatically lead to better language learning.

**Check Your Progress 1**

**Notes:**

a) Write your answers in the space given below:

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1. Differentiate between the objectives of teaching content oriented and skill oriented subjects like language.

2. What is the role of text content in language classroom?

3. Mention the advantage a language teacher has over the subject teacher when using the text book.

4. A passage on Mohenjodaro and Harappa can occur in an English Reader. The same content (more or less) can also occur in a chapter in the History textbook. Mention one learning activity as an English teacher you would include in a lesson related to this passage, that the History teacher most probably will not use.
4.3 PLANNING AT THE LEVEL OF THE TEACHER

We have noted that the individual teacher is working within the framework represented by the syllabus and course materials. In a typical school the academic calendar for the year (agreed upon at a general staff meeting) will indicate the number of hours/periods for each subject over a term, weekly timetable, dates for units tests and term end tests, and so on. So a lot of planning is already in place. The teacher’s real work of planning begins when a unit in the syllabus/course book has to be taken up and covered in, say, about eight lessons spread over two weeks. However elaborate the course book, it will not (and cannot) indicate in detail the transactions for each lesson involving forty particular learners and their teacher. We noted earlier that only the teacher knows the background and readiness of the group for the matter in the new unit. She can judge whether some revision or special preparation is necessary, and some supplementary material would be useful. She uses this knowledge to work out the overall teaching plan for the unit and for each lesson.

The skill development orientation of language teaching (which is different from that of ‘body of knowledge’ based content subjects) is important. The English teacher has much less presenting to do, but much more organization of learners’ activity. For the subject teacher the planning and preparation for a lesson will be based centrally on the topic. How can I best present-explain this concept? What types of exercises/problems will help consolidate the new ideas? For the English teacher the central questions would be: Given the theme (story, passage, dialogue, puzzle) serving as the base, how can I get my learners to use the ideas or situations or characters they find, to participate in tasks/activities requiring them to read or speak or write? Most course books today include several activities in each unit, usually related to a set of texts, both spoken and written. (These represent the language exposure students receive in a given lesson. Other lessons will give them exposure to different samples.) The teacher can select what would be most appropriate, and sometimes modify them. As noted in section 4.4.2, it is possible (even desirable sometimes) to jump to something in a later unit if it seems ‘appropriate’. ‘Appropriate’ here means likely to get students interested and involved.

The next step is to decide what kind of revision and or special preparation the students need so that the text and activities seem manageable to them. Sometimes this could be through presentation and explanation of some concept or principle by the teacher. This will help in getting the students get started on the activities on the right lines. After that the teacher has to observe and step in where help seems needed. These are occasions when the teacher’s input can be very effective, because of the need and readiness we noted above. The important principle is that they cannot be planned in the usual sense, as they emerge in an unpredictable way. But they can be prepared for.

4.4 THE IMPORTANCE OF LESSON PLANNING

In any teaching learning process if the objectives for the process is to be achieved then it is important to list the same down. Write down why planning is an important aspect of any teaching activity. Compare your answer with the following list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Planning:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Is conducive to efficient teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Guarantees that the teaching follows an organized approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ensures that the syllabus is covered</td>
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</table>
Instructional Planning in Teaching of English

- Gives the teacher confidence when delivering the lesson
- Acts as a base for future lessons
- Helps in dealing with differences
- Is indicative of the effort put in by the teacher.

Lesson plans also have a great effect on the teaching process. Here are some more reasons for the same:

- **Clarity**: It provides clarity on the decisions to be made to help students move towards learner goals.
- **Unpredictable events**: Teachers can deal better with unpredictable events as they are likely to have an alternative plan already lined up.
- **Framework**: It gives teaching a format, a kind of sequence.
- **Professionalism**: It provides a professional base for the work in hand, namely, teaching.
- **For the learner**: It makes them feel that the teacher is well organized and is concerned about their learning.

4.4.1 Planning a Lesson

The teacher actually imagines a lesson before it has happened. This involves prediction, anticipation, sequencing, organising and simplifying. Of course the final decisions would depend on the teaching-learning situation in the classroom, the learner’s needs and interest. However most often decisions would depend upon:

- the aims of the lesson.
- the content.
- the group that is being addressed.
- the tasks to be presented.
- the available resources.

The format for a lesson can differ between subjects and also between schools. By and large it is said that the traditional lesson plan of objectives, content, methods, materials and evaluation needs to be replaced by a strategic approach which is learner-centred. Whatever approach is adopted, there are some key curriculum principles that go into lesson planning. They are:

- **objectives**
- differentiation-Dealing with a diverse population of children.
- **breadth and balance** - The subject matter to be dealt with.
- **progression** - The movement from easy to difficult.
- **continuity** - Logical connectives within the subject.
- **depth** - How much exposure is expected?
- **relevance** - Is it within the student’s learning sphere?
- **personalisation** - How can teaching-learning be made meaningful to every child?
● assessment - Does it incorporate both formative and summative assessment?

A good lesson plan will try to cover a range of accepted learning behaviours and experiences like the ones given below:

Opportunities for:

● developing enquiry skills
● problem solving individually and in groups
● evaluating outcomes
● processing information
● reflecting and reviewing
● developing social skills
● taking responsibility for learning
● converting mistakes into learning opportunities.

Check Your Progress 2

Notes:  
a) Write your answers in the space given below:

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1) Give five reasons which support the view that a teacher should always have a plan in mind, if not actually written down.

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2) List the curriculum principles that go into lesson planning.

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3) What learning behaviours should be included in a lesson plan?

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4.4.2 Choosing a Lesson Plan Format

Usually schools have a lesson plan format worked out. Often, the subject teams work out their own formats. Finding the right format is a process of trial and error. It is a dynamic process and value must be attached to making mistakes and correcting them.

Once a lesson planning culture is developed, it is necessary to identify the learning opportunities. These should include the opportunities listed earlier. All lesson plans should include subject, class, unit of work and place in the sequence of learning. The evaluation process should also be included to ascertain the success of the lesson in question. Teachers need to reflect at the end of each lesson to plan further lessons for the future. They need to ask at the end of the lesson:

- What happened?
- What effect did the lesson (plan) have?
- Why did the events unfold as they did?
- How could the plan be improved?
- How might the teacher/students have behaved differently?
- How should things be done the next time?

Some other aspects that can be included in a lesson plan. These are:

- Class details
- Seating plan for group work/pair work/individual work/whole class
- Subject details—in terms of sequence of learning
- Learning objectives
- Link to previous lesson
- Resources available
- Procedures (under this head we could include the following key issues)
  - Are the activities clearly stated?
  - Is there a clear structure?
  - Are the key points apparent?
  - Are differentiated strategies highlighted?
  - What is the role of ICT?
  - Is inclusive education taken care of?

When writing the objectives of the lesson these points should be clearly articulated and should indicate what the student would be able to do at the end of the lesson.

Here are some examples of how the teacher can articulate what the student should take back from the teaching-learning process in behavioural terms.

At the end of the lesson the student should be able:

- to identify and describe;
- to explain;
- to recognise;
- to participate in;
- to combine;
- to communicate ideas in writing/speaking;
- to generate ideas;
- to use a range of vocabulary/expressions/structures;
- to develop an awareness of formal/informal writing;

When planning a lesson teachers need to remember that every student is different. Sometimes it is good to invite another teacher to observe your lesson and give feedback. Lessons are effective when students are clear about what they are doing and why they are doing it. An environment that is challenging and stimulating, offers a variety of learning opportunities for the students. Lesson planning supports teachers in their “search for excellence and transformation and for this to happen it must be relevant and purposeful, long on impact and short on tedium. In the hands of skilled and professional teachers, structure and purpose will be tempered by flexibility and intuition, enriched by creativity and imagination and distilled by professionalism and the belief that every child matters, as does every teacher” Lynn Maidment (2008).

Check Your Progress 3

Notes:  

a) Write your answers in the space given below:

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1) Why is it important for teachers to assess themselves at the end of a lesson?

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2) What should a teacher consider when planning a lesson?

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4.4.3 Lesson Planning: Using Into, Through and Beyond.

Sometimes we can also plan a lesson by using the verbs Into, Through and Beyond. How do we do this?
### Into
This is actually preparing students to receive the new material to be presented. In other words to get into the material. This helps in increasing their interest, and motivation to learn, and creates a positive and receptive atmosphere. This also helps in preparing for the new learning experience.

Decide what preparation is necessary.
- Vocabulary?
- Stimulate curiosity?
- Provide some relevant background information?
- Talk through the new subject and highlight some parts?
- Relate previous material to the new material?
- What additional material could you use-videos, music, storytelling or an excursion?

This preparation if incorporated with a true understanding of your students will make the new learning more meaningful.

### Through
After the stage has been set by taking students into the material we now look at how to take them through the material. This implies helping them understand, comprehend, explore the terms, concepts etc. How can this be done?
- Through reading response logs;
- Relating story to personal experiences;
- Recording questions as you proceed;
- Dramatization;
- Visualisations;
- Illustrations;
- Discussions

### Beyond
This is the stage when an opportunity is taken to expand and deepen the students learning experience. It means helping students develop new insights, think critically and clarify their understanding of what has been introduced. How can we do this?
- Ask them to share their insights, individually, and in groups;
- Design activities to apply and extend their comprehension;
- Get them to work in groups and move beyond the classroom into the community;
- Offer credits for individuals who can really move beyond the text.

### Check Your Progress 4

Notes:  
- a) Write your answers in the space given below:  
- b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1) Take up any one aspect of lesson planning-into, through, beyond and write about it with an example that you tried out in your class.
4.4.4 Hints for Effective Lesson Planning

Given below are some cues which you could use when planning a lesson.

- When planning, think about your students and your teaching context first.
- Prepare more than you may need. It is advisable to have “reserve” activity ready in case of extra time. Similarly, it is important to think in advance which component(s) of the lesson may be skipped, if you find yourself with too little time to do everything you have planned.
- Keep an eye on the time allotted. Include timing in the plan itself. The smooth running of your lesson depends to some extent on proper timing.
- Think about transitions (from speaking to writing or from a slow task to a more active one).
- Include variety if things are not working the way you have planned.
- Pull the class together at the beginning and at the end.
- End your lessons on a positive note.
- Planning enables you to think about your teaching in a systematic way before you enter the classroom. The outcome of your planning is a coherent framework which contains a logical sequence of tasks to prepare the field for more effective teaching and learning.
- Plans not only express your intentions, there are projects which need to be implemented in a real classroom with real students. Many things may happen which you had not anticipated. In the end you need to adapt your plans in order to respond to your pupils’ actual needs. It is important to bear in mind Jim Scrivener’s words: Prepare thoroughly. But in class, teach the learners not the plan.

Check Your Progress 5

Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below:
   b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1) List at least five qualities of an effective lesson from the hints given above.
4.5 SAMPLE LESSON PLANS

Given below are examples of lesson plans:

4.5.1 Writing for Newspapers

Students often read newspapers for a wide variety of reasons, not least of which is to keep informed in English. As you know, newspaper writing style tends to have three levels: Headlines, leading sentences, and article content. Each of these has its own style. This lesson focuses on calling students’ attention to this type of writing style on a deeper, grammatical level. It ends with students writing their own short articles with a follow-up listening comprehension opportunity.

Objectives

- To develop an understanding of newspaper writing style –differentiating between headline, leading sentence and article content;
- To familiarize learners with newspaper writing style;
- To develop writing skills in the style of newspaper article writing; and
- To develop listening comprehension.

Activities:

- Writing short newspaper articles
- Listening to an article

Outline:

- Ask students to get the previous day’s newspaper to class.
- Ask students to read the newspaper article selected and summarize the contents.
- Have students analyze the difference between the headline, leading sentence and article content in terms of tense usage and vocabulary in small groups (3-4 students).
- As a class, check that the differences between headline, leading sentence and article content are clear. Here is a short guideline to the main differences:
  - Headline: Simple present or past tense, idiomatic, catchy vocabulary, no use of function words.
  - Leading sentence: Present perfect tense often used to give general overview.
  - Article content: Proper tense usage, including a change from present perfect to past tenses to give detailed, specific information about what, where and when something happened.
- Once the differences have been understood, have students divide into pairs or small groups (3-4 students).
- Using the work sheet, small groups should write their own newspaper articles using the headlines provided or come up with their own stories.
- Have students read their newspaper articles aloud allowing you to incorporate some listening comprehension into the lesson.
Task

Choose a Headline and Write Your Own Newspaper Article.

Newspaper Article 1

TRUCK CRASHES INTO LIVING ROOM

Leading sentence: provide your leading sentence

Article content: Write at least three short paragraphs about the incident

Newspaper Article 2

SCHOOLS CLOSED-INTENSE COLD

Leading sentence: provide your leading sentence

Article content: Write at least three short paragraphs about the situation.

Newspaper Article 3

NO FAILURES IN SCHOOLS-AUTOMATIC PROMOTIONS

Leading sentence: provide your leading sentence

Article content: Write at least three short paragraphs about the new policy development.

Students can work on these articles as a group or in pairs.

4.5.2 Listening and Speaking

Objectives

- To develop listening skills;
- To develop speaking skills and;
- To practice listening and speaking skills with classmates.

Materials

- Video of people speaking clearly and in simple English (if available/can be created)
- Pencils and erasers
- “Have You Ever...” search paper, 1 copy per student (see procedures below)
- Computer with Internet access (optional)

Procedures

1. Before beginning the lesson, create a “Have You Ever?” search paper by dividing a piece of white paper into 16 equal squares: Draw four columns down and four rows across the sheet of paper. At the bottom of each square write something that at least one student in the class may have experienced or a quality at least one student may have, such as “broken a bone,” “loves pizza,” “speaks two foreign languages,” “has been on train,” or “is good dancer.” Photocopy one copy of the search paper for each student.

2. To begin, play a few rounds of telephone with the class to demonstrate the importance of having good speaking and listening skills. Then have students watch video on Speaking and Listening Strategies to further explore good skills.
3. After watching the program, talk about experiences when students have had to ask questions or follow directions. Ask them: Why is it important to give clear directions? What kinds of situations have you been in when you have had to listen very carefully to someone talking? Why is it important to develop good speaking and listening skills? Have students describe situations when they have not used good speaking or listening skills. What were the results?

4. Explain to students that they will play a scavenger hunt-type game with their classmates. Hand out copies of “Have You Ever?” and tell students that the object of the game is to be the first person in the class to complete the squares. To do so, they must match a classmate’s name to the criteria written in a square. Each square must represent a different person, so a winning “Have You Ever?” sheet cannot have one student’s name on it in more than one square.

5. Tell students that they will walk around the classroom and ask their classmates questions to fill in the squares on their sheet, such as “Have you ever broken a bone?” If a classmate has broken a bone, they meet the criterion, and the student should write the classmate’s name in that square. If not, the student can choose to ask the person a different question or move to a different classmate until they have found one who has broken a bone. Explain to students that they will also answer questions. For example, if Mary is asking John a question, she cannot leave him when he has answered her question. She should wait until John asks his question and they are both ready to move to new classmates.

6. Remind students that everyone in the classroom will be working on their scavenger hunt at the same time, so it is important that students spoken quietly, listen to what their classmates are saying very carefully, and not to run. The first person to fill in all of their squares without repeating a name wins. Tell students to raise their paper and call out if they think they have won.

7. Give students time to complete their scavenger hunt. Walk around the classroom while students are engaged to make sure everyone is playing fairly and nobody is running. Call time when a student has announced they have finished and have the students quietly freeze where they are standing while you check the possible winning sheet. If the student is mistaken, have the class resume the activity. If not, ask the students to return to their seats.

8. Discuss the scavenger hunt with students. Who learned something new about their classmates? What did they learn? Why was it important to use good listening skills during the scavenger hunt? Why was it important to use good speaking skills?

9. If time allows, students can practice their reading and listening skills online with interactive stories at this Web site [http://www.alfy.com/Storyville](http://www.alfy.com/Storyville). A classroom management skill involves controlling noise levels with adequate signals. While the task is to be completed individually, there is a lot of interaction between the students.

**Evaluation**

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students’ work during this lesson.

- **Three points:** Students were highly engaged in class and group discussions; enthusiastically participated in the scavenger hunt; followed the rules of the scavenger hunt without needing teacher guidance or supervision; and demonstrated a clear understanding of the importance of having good speaking and listening skills.
Two points: Students generally engaged in class and group discussions; participated in the scavenger hunt; followed the rules of the scavenger hunt with some teacher supervision or guidance; and demonstrated a basic understanding of the importance of having good speaking and listening skills.

One point: Students participated minimally in class and group discussions; were unable to participate in the scavenger hunt without constant teacher supervision or refused to participate in the scavenger hunt; and were unable to demonstrate a basic understanding of the importance of having good speaking and listening skills. (adapted from www.discoveryeducation.com)

4.5.3 Beginning Reading (Vocabulary)

Subject: Reading

Duration: 1-2 class periods Sections

Objectives

- Define the terms antonym, synonym, and homophone; and
- Identify pairs of antonyms.

Materials

- Writing paper
- Dictionaries and thesauruses
- Index cards, 20 per student
- Crayons, markers, or coloured pencils
- Pencils and erasers

Procedures

1. Ask students to define the terms synonym, antonym, and homophone. Ask them how homophones differ from synonyms and antonyms?

2. Ask each student to share at least one example of a pair of synonyms, antonyms, and homophones. Write examples on the board or on a piece of chart paper and discuss them. Discuss any questionable examples with the class. Are the words actually (synonyms, antonyms, homophones)? Why or why not? Assess the students’ understanding of the types of words and make sure they understand the differences before moving on.

3. Next, tell them that they will create a game called Antonym Match-Up. Have students quietly and individually create lists of 10 pairs of antonyms. Tell them not to share their lists with one another. Students may use a dictionary or thesaurus.

4. Give each student 20 blank index cards: They will write one word from their list on each card and draw a picture representing it on the same card. If they have difficulty drawing images of certain pairs, allow them to come up with new antonyms that might be better suited to the game.

5. Next, have students pair up and play their games by mixing up their antonym pairs and laying the cards on a surface in rows of five so their partner can see all the cards. Partners must correctly match all the antonym pairs. Each partner
should take a turn. If time permits, allow students to play with a different student. Walk around the classroom and assess student behavior and understanding while they are playing.

6. After students have finished playing, discuss some of the antonyms. Which were easier antonyms to match? Which were difficult? If any antonym pairs did not seem clear, discuss them with the class to see if they are actually antonyms.

7. Have students keep their match-up games in their desks to play during free time. If time and resources permit, allow students to create match-up games for homophones or synonyms.

The lesson is planned as a pair work activity. The teacher should ensure that both the students are involved.

Assessment

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students’ work during this lesson.

- **Three points:** Students easily and clearly defined the terms synonym, antonym, and homophone and provided clear examples of all three types of words; created unique and colorful match-up cards with 10 pairs of true antonyms; were able to easily determine all 10 pairs of antonyms in the game with little or no assistance.

- **Two points:** Students sufficiently defined at least two of the terms synonym, antonym, or homophone; provided adequate examples of at least two of the types; created somewhat unique and colorful match-up cards with at least eight pairs of true antonyms; were able to determine at least six pairs of antonyms in the game with some assistance.

- **One point:** Students were unable to define the terms synonym, antonym, or homophone and did not provide examples of any of the types of words; created incomplete or incorrect match-up cards with four or fewer pairs of true antonyms; were unable or unwilling to determine the pairs of antonyms in the game without a great deal of assistance.

Vocabulary

**antonym**

*Definition:* A word having a meaning opposite of another word.

*Context:* Hot and cold are antonyms because they are opposites.

**Homophone**

*Definition:* One of two or more words that are pronounced the same but differ in meaning, origin, and sometimes spelling.

*Context:* The words see and sea are homophones.

**Synonym**

*Definition:* A word having the same or nearly the same meaning as another word or other words.

*Context:* Fast and rapid are examples of synonyms because they have the same meaning.

(adapted from www.discoveryeducation.com)
4.5.4 Creative Writing

Primary Subject - English (Creative Writing)
Secondary Subject - Computers and Internet

Objectives – By the end of the lesson the student should be able to:

- write the outline of a story
- develop content for the story in the form of images
- use Microsoft word
- use internet

Materials
- Picture of a desert
- Music of waves
- Computer access

Introduction

“I want everyone to close your eyes. (Turn on the music of the waves.) Ok, I want you all to imagine that you are on a boat enjoying your vacation. All of a sudden, your boat is faced with a terrible storm. Your boat is tossed about on the ocean. You realize that the only way that you and your family are going to survive is if you jump off your boat and swim to the little island 20 miles away. You throw on your life jacket, and you and your family jump off the boat. In the process of jumping, you hit your head and you are knocked unconscious. You wake up on the shore of the little island with your family and a few of the supplies from the boat: a large piece of wood, a tarp (like a blanket, but made of plastic), some netting, and a box. Ok, open your eyes. This island is yours and your family’s new home (hold the picture of the deserted island up), at least until you are rescued.”

Transition:

“Now that you have survived the jump and are now on the island, I want you to write and tell me in story form what you are going to do on your island. How are you going to survive? What are you going to do for shelter, entertainment, etc? Remember to look at the picture for help. Also remember that you have some supplies from your boat. You can hand write some ideas, but the final copy must be typed.”

Students will work in small groups of four.

Task

Each group to write a story what they were going to do in the island, and their strategies for survival. Ask them to brainstorm and collect ideas from everyone and then attempt writing. They should use support vocabulary, edit their work and also add illustrations.

Closure

Ask each group to display the story on the board. Students walk around to read each other’s story. Get students together and draw out what was a good story, what could be improved upon. Also discuss any grammatical errors, style of writing and the development of content.
Home Task
Write a story in about 250 words on “The Day I got lost in the market”.

The lesson advocates group work. Teachers should ensure that all the students participate actively and also have well defined roles.

Here is a sample lesson plan that integrates the teaching of science with the teaching of English.

Insect Travel Brochure

Topic: Insects and their habitats

Mode: project mode

Time: 2 to 3 days

Objectives

Science

- The student will become familiar with the habitats of different insects;
- S/he will be able to understand various concepts such as carnivore, herbivore, omnivore, producer, consumer, autotrophy, heterotrophy etc;
- S/he will observe various habitats and find out why some habitats are suitable for some insects and why some are not suitable;
- S/he will develop the skill of scientific enquiry-the ability to use evidence effectively; and
- S/he will draw conclusions based on evidence.

Language skills

- Develop vocabulary associated with the insect world.
- Learn to communicate conclusions of observations effectively.
- Learn to design a brochure.
- Develop interviewing skills.
- Develop presentation skills.
- Develop comprehension and research skills.

Steps

Introduction

Begin by asking the class if they could talk about a favourite vacation. They could share this in groups as the teacher walks around and supports the discussion with adequate vocabulary. Some questions that could help take the discussion forward are:

- Where did you go?
- Was it near or far from home?
- Why did they like it?
Was it similar to home?

How did they learn about it?

The teacher will show them advertisements from the newspapers and travel guides about vacation spots.

Attention will be drawn to vocabulary and language used in such guides, to attract people. They will also look at the layout and the general attractiveness of the brochure. The features of a brochure will be listed on the board.

**Setting the task**

Students will be asked to create a travel brochure that will entice an insect to travel to that site. In doing this, they have to keep in mind what they know about the insect:

- Habitat
- Food habits
- Basic needs of the insect

The brochure should have a picture and description of the insect and the place advertised.

Students may also be provided reference material in the class.

Students may also be asked to use technology if needed, accessing the internet under supervision.

**Presentation**

Students work in groups. Teacher facilitates responsibilities, eg. art work, writing, collecting information, collating information and preparing for presentations. Leaders to be identified by the groups. Students be guided within the group to give constructive criticism, to question, and to remain within the group when presenting eventually.

As students present they will be questioned on their scientific knowledge about insects by a subject expert.

Students share information, teach each other, improve their knowledge on insects and their habitats, develop confidence as they are able to communicate better. Ensure that every student has a part to play. They are also exposed to the language of a brochure.

**Moving ahead**

The project can move forward to a finale involving an exhibition of insects and their habitats. They can include a poster that creates an understanding of how insects play a role in the environment. They develop a better understanding of what is needed for a healthy habitat. All the new vocabulary gained and the facts learnt can be listed and displayed so that the students imbibe the information.

The activity can be related to other content areas. Through social studies they can look at landscapes and features of other lands and find out about insects in foreign lands.

To add to language learning they can write stories of how the insect visited the land advertised and its reflections on visiting that land.

It can be tied to mathematics if they can create graphs of the number of different types of insects selected.
Assessment

Information presented: 10 marks

It should be accurate, in depth and demonstrate knowledge about the insect.

Brochure: 10 marks

Design and language of the brochure. Pictures used, do they support the information given etc.

Creativity: 10 marks

Is the brochure attractive and presented well?

Presentation skills: 10 marks

Confidence and language skills in the final presentation.

Group skills: 10 marks

Team skills of sharing and collaborating. Leadership skills exhibited.

Assessment should have clearly stated rubrics under each head to make it as objective as possible. It will also help in the new scheme of CCE.

Since it is a group activity all the principles of this type of activity must be kept in mind.

The teacher is the person who must ultimately decide what is best for the students. Do remember however that while subjects are compartmentalised for us the child comprehends better when it is integrated as she has then a holistic view to learning.

Check Your Progress 1

Notes:
a) Write your answers in the space given below:
b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1) Design a lesson plan on “tenses” using any of the models given above.

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4.5.6 Strategies in the Classroom

Given below are some useful strategies in your language class.

Using Images to generate writing/speaking

Using images is a key strategy to use with learners of English. Once the class is shown the picture which could be on the computer screen/printed copies/overhead, students are asked to write whatever they observe at random. Then they are asked to write down any questions they would like to ask about the picture. They ask each other the questions. Once they have been able to locate the answers, then they are
asked to categorise the information. They then write different paragraphs. The class can be given a single picture or many different ones group wise. The teacher facilitates the writing by helping with vocabulary and correct sentence structures.

Students can select a photo and record what they see. They can then listen to their recordings. There are many internet sites that can help you select the right pictures.

The best pictures are the ones that raise some curiosity, have something strange about them.

**Thought Bubbles and Picture Dictation**

They can use thought bubbles for the people in the pictures. In picture dictations students draw pictures as the teacher dictates. It can also be a partner activity where half the class is given one picture and the other half another picture. Students with different pictures partner with each other. One student describes and the other draws. Roles are then reversed. When it is completed the feedback is given.

**Thought bubbles**

Write in the bubble what you think the girl is thinking.

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**Activity:** *Listen and draw*

1. In the middle of the picture is a round table.
2. A dog is under the table. It is a brown dog.
3. A fruit basket is on the table. Near the basket is a Knife.
4. Near the table is a chair. A girl is sitting on it. She is eating ice cream.
Instructional Planning in Teaching of English

Blooms Taxonomy

Pictures are given to students and questions are framed according to Blooms taxonomy.

Knowledge: In which geographical area is the picture located?
Comprehension: What do you think is happening in the picture?
Application: How would you describe the picture in one sentence?
Analysis: What do you think is likely to happen to the people in the picture?
Synthesis: What are they thinking?
Evaluation: Are they too young/old to be doing what they are doing?

Compare and Contrast

In this case the students are provided with two images and they are asked to compare the two. They should then generate a paragraph about the similarities and differences in the pictures.

4.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have looked at the main features of classroom based instruction which is in the hands of the teacher. We noted how the older view of good lessons as efficient transmitters of predetermined knowledge to students who silently receive what is given is being replaced by the image of lessons with learners actively participating, contributing with their ideas, often enriching what the teacher presents. Organizing such instruction requires more skill and effort than conventional teaching.

We learnt that in such a learner centred view, diversity in a class is an advantage rather than a burden. We went on to look at the essential features of English (language) instruction which is different from that for content subjects. We noted that materials should expose learners to language texts, and classroom transaction should provide opportunities for learners to try and comprehend texts and express their ideas using whatever language they know at any stage. We learnt that planning English lessons involves using the syllabus/textbook matter as a base and preparing
a range of possible activities—which will be taken up in a flexible manner because the classroom process will be somewhat unpredictable.

The importance of lesson planning cannot be undermined. All teachers need to ensure that lessons are planned carefully and that they provide the teacher with the guidance to proceed with the lesson. Teachers must constantly update themselves with the relevant and new strategies used in classrooms to ensure that the lessons are interactive and learner centred.

4.6 SUGGESTED READINGS


4.7 ANSWERS

Check your progress 2

1. The course/lesson writer provides a general framework of ideas and suggestions which is the same for all classes of the same level in thousands of schools in the state’s system. The teacher adapts the general plan given by the lesson writer to suit the learners in her classroom.

2. A teacher is expected to adapt the text content given in a common course book to suit the unique nature of the learners in her classroom. Therefore, a teacher may provide additional input in the form of content or activity or some time may skip a part of the text content or ask students to read on their own or may postpone for the time being. So, lessons based on the same unit of a course book taught in different classes/schools are likely to be different.
Check your progress 1

1. The main objective of teaching content oriented subject is to help students gain both knowledge of facts, terminology and understanding of concepts and principles.

   The main objective of teaching language is to help the student to gain the ability to use language for communication- to express ideas in speech and writing and understand what is in spoken and written texts.

2. Text contents serve mainly as illustrations of language in use. It helps in learning about the way language forms convey meaning.

3. A language teacher does not have to follow the sequence of lessons strictly page by page. Content from a later lesson or current events can be picked up for illustrating certain language forms and use. A subject teacher has to follow the given sequence of the topics/subtopics. There is very little scope or going in different directions. Extra material if used must help to illustrate and explain a difficult concept. In the language class, on the other hand, it is the activity that matters, and any text whatever be the topic that students are likely to engage with is acceptable.

Check your progress 2

1. **Clarity:** It provides clarity on the decisions to be made to help students move towards learner goals
   - Unpredictable events: Teachers can deal with unpredictable events as they are likely to have an alternate plan lined up.
   - Framework: it gives teaching a structure.
   - Professionalism: It provides a professional base for the work in hand namely teaching
   - For the Learner: The learner feels reassured that the teacher is well organized and is concerned about their learning.

2. **Objectives**
   - Differentiation-dealing with a diverse population of children
   - Breadth and balance -the subject matter to be dealt with
   - Progression- the movement from easy to difficult
   - Continuity- logical connectives within the subject
   - Depth- how much exposure is expected?
   - Relevance-is it within the student’s learning sphere?
   - Personalisation-how can it be made meaningful to every child?
   - Assessment-does it incorporate both formative and summative assessment

3. **Developing enquiry skills**
   - Problem solving individually and in groups
   - Evaluating outcomes
• Processing information
• Reflecting and reviewing
• Developing social skills
• Taking responsibility for learning
• Converting mistakes into learning opportunities.

Check your progress 3

1. Teachers need to reflect at the end of each lesson in order to plan further lessons for the future. They need to ask at the end of the lesson:
   • What happened?
   • What effect did it have?
   • Why did it happen?
   • How could it be improved?
   • How might the teachers/students have behaved differently?
   • How should things be done the next time?

2. When planning a lesson teachers need to remember that every student is different. Sometimes it is good to invite another teacher to observe your lesson and give feedback. Lessons are effective when students are clear about what they are doing and why they are doing it. An environment that is challenging, stimulating, offers a variety of learning opportunities for the students.
UNIT 5 MONITORING INSTRUCTION - THE REFLECTIVE TEACHER

Structure

5.0 Objectives

5.1 Introduction

5.2 Monitoring in the classroom

5.3 The importance of monitoring in the classroom

5.4 How can we monitor our own class?
   5.4.1 What are your beliefs about teaching language?
   5.4.2 What are the learners’ beliefs and attitudes about language learning?
   5.4.3 How did tasks/exercises work in class?
   5.4.4 Classroom observation
   5.4.5 How do students learn in class?

5.5 Let us sum up

5.6 Answers

5.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you should have gained

● an understanding of the concept of monitoring as an ongoing activity
● an understanding of the nature of monitoring of one’s own teaching
● an appreciation of the value of monitoring one’s own class
● familiarity with aspects of instruction that can be usefully monitored
● familiarity with some of the tools and procedures that can be used for monitoring.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Planning for classroom instruction has to be flexible. What actually happens during lessons cannot be fully predicted and controlled. Thus planning effectively means being prepared with ideas and resources to deal flexibly with situations that emerge as existing plans proceed.

The teacher has to judge the situation from lesson to lesson and indeed from stage to stage within lessons, and make appropriate decisions and choices. For this she needs to seek and obtain information in the form of feedback about ongoing instruction. She has also to use this information to fine-tune her teaching so that best use is made of the opportunities the classroom context provides. In this unit we shall focus on this extra effort (paying special attention to what is going on) that is demanded by a flexible approach to teaching. We will also see that monitoring in the long run helps to make the teacher a reflective practitioner “one who is learning from experience, understanding ideas more deeply and thus growing professionally.

Watching and keeping track of something that is happening is something that we do quite naturally and almost unconsciously as part of our everyday lives. Sometimes this is deliberate and conscious. For instance, while crossing a road with heavy
vehicular traffic or driving on such a road, or while cooking something unusual or special we tend to pay close attention both to what is happening around us and to our own actions. However, while engaging in routine and habitual activities (the daily walk to the bus stop, locking doors and turning off lights every night, etc.), we hardly pay any attention to the detailed actions or steps. However, we are monitoring here too, because as soon as something unusual happens or something goes wrong we immediately become fully aware of what is going on. This process of watching or observing something as it happens is called monitoring. In our discussion here, we will be focusing more on the monitoring that is done with a higher level of conscious attention. However, a valuable base level of informal and unconscious monitoring is always present when we engage in any purposeful activity. Systematic monitoring is a matter of building on that base, not a correction or remedy applied to something that is faulty.

The word monitoring has associations with inspection and evaluation by an ‘external’ authority. The traffic policeman, the health inspector (at a food processing plant), the referee for games like football and hockey, are all monitoring in this inspection mode. They are external agents who have been vested with some power or authority. However, there is another quite different mode of monitoring that people engage in, without any ‘official’ power to do so being given to them. Consider a scooterist going through heavy traffic. S/he is monitoring what is going on all around him/her very carefully and constantly adjusting his/her path (speed, direction, lane, etc.) in response to this information. Similarly, a doctor who is monitoring the progress of a patient will study the ‘data’ and make various decisions about treatment and review them after a day or two or maybe after a few hours. In both cases the person who is doing the monitoring uses the information as the basis for action, and this action relates importantly to that person’s own plans and operations. In this unit we consider the processes of monitoring when the teacher is getting feedback about her own teaching. Monitoring helps her become more aware of what is going on in class and she can use this awareness to modify (improve) her teaching.

5.2 MONITORING IN THE CLASSROOM

We have seen some general examples of monitoring ongoing activities above. Now let us see how monitoring occurs in the setting of the classroom lesson; after all a lesson is a planned sequence of activity leading to a goal. Here are some examples of teacher activity in class that are linked to the monitoring function.

Example 1 A science teacher is explaining a new concept (e.g., friction). She presents two detailed examples to help clarify the concept. She notices that many students are puzzled and are glancing at one another anxiously. She decides to take up a somewhat informal example, one that was not in her plan initially. (And fortunately this seems to ‘work’....)

Example 2 A language teacher is dealing with a poem from the Reader. During the discussion, a student of ‘average’ ability (one who rarely says anything in class) offers his interpretation of a symbol. This is novel, and also quite insightful for a child of that age. Some other students seem to find this perspective interesting. The teacher sets aside the interpretation-explanation she was leading the class towards (in her plan) and spends about ten minutes exploring this new possibility. She is especially concerned about accepting and encouraging students who are quiet and shy, and building up their confidence.

Example 3 A language teacher dealing with a prose extract, has allowed about 15 minutes for discussion in small groups in her plan. The class does not seem very
enthusiastic, and the groups take a long time to settle down. But after about 12
minutes she finds that most groups are getting into fairly serious discussions, and that
there is a high level of participation on the whole. She decides to let the discussions
continue for another ten minutes. As a consequence the ‘reporting back’ stage is set
back to the next lesson. This teacher was keen on taking full advantage of discussion
questions that the students obviously found interesting, and promoting widespread
participation.

What do we find in these examples that might be stated as a general ‘principle’? It is
that teachers are not rigidly following detailed plans they might have thought of very
diligently. They are modifying their plans based on the feedback they get about
what is happening, and what students are doing. However, they are not just giving
up and trying something different away from the plan. The changes appear to be
purposeful in response to the real situation in the class.

Thus we can say that monitoring is a typical and normal aspect of the teacher’s
classroom behaviour. However, this does not mean that monitoring is always a highly
conscious and systematic process. In fact it is usually not so. Monitoring is more
likely to be done without the teacher being fully aware of it - something that is more
or less automatic. Now this is very different from doing it casually or carelessly. Let
us recall the skilled scooterist or driver on a busy road. S/he is getting information
and acting on it all the time, but may not be conscious of it - because this observation
and response has been so well practised that it is virtually automatic. Here again we
must remember that this ‘automatic’ behaviour is not a matter of fixed or rigid habits,
it remains highly flexible.

In the same way, a teacher who is monitoring her class and acting on the information,
may not be quite aware of it. Suppose we asked a teacher shortly after a lesson, to
write down specific instances from the lesson where she got relevant information
from monitoring and then took a clear decision to change her plan. She would
probably say she cannot remember any specific stage where she did this. Suppose
on the other hand, that when she was relaxed and had some free time, we asked her
do the following exercise. [If you are a practising teacher now, please do this in
relation to a class you taught recently.]

Think back to some incident or development that occurred in class that you had not
expected. For example,

– a sudden noise in a corner when the class was listening to you attentively;
– an error made by a ‘good’ student;
– a brilliant answer given by a ‘weak’ student.

1) What exactly happened?

2) Why do you think it happened that way?

3) How did you handle it?

Here we have given the cue that unexpected event(s) should be the starting point.
The teacher will probably be able to recall one or more specific stages of the lesson.
(As we know from general experience, unexpected events are always easier to
remember.)

The teacher would also probably be able to state what her response to the situation
was, what consequences it had. In other words, she would normally be able to
comment on the incident(s), and even offer some sort of interpretation.
What this suggests is that even though a teacher might say that she did not do any conscious monitoring, when encouraged to think back to the class and reflect on it, she will often show evidence of having ‘taken in’ information about various aspects of the class - and these could easily be aspects that she did not intend to pay special attention to. One reason for this is that teachers do have some plan for a lesson. What will be done and what is supposed or expected to happen has been thought about beforehand. Teachers, thus, generally monitor at least some aspects of the classes they teach, though not very consciously most of the time.

Check Your Progress 1

1) Some common activities get very little attention from us while others are attended to carefully. What is the difference between the two?

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2) Even in the case of activities that do not usually get much attention, the level of attention can suddenly increase. Why does this happen?

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5.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF MONITORING IN THE CLASSROOM

As we have seen above, an informal level of monitoring is going on while the teacher is conducting a lesson. This is an interesting and encouraging phenomenon. However, we must be careful not to assume that all teachers monitor carefully and successfully all the time, and their teaching is therefore very relevant to the needs of their students. Far from it! In fact in all areas of education, and language courses are no exception, there is the persistent problem of the curriculum-in-operation not being very effective or satisfactory. Even newly designed courses, supported by sophisticated materials and appropriate teacher orientation reveal many inadequacies, especially when followed in a variety of institutions. The explanation lies in the fact that the teaching-learning process is not a simple and straightforward matter of predetermined and neatly organized inputs leading to clearly predictable outcomes. As we know from everyday experience, even much simpler operations can go wrong. For example, when assembling a household gadget following a manual, or when baking a cake using a recipe, following a set procedure does not always guarantee success.

It should not surprise us therefore, that in our teaching-learning endeavours, there is nearly always a gap between our intentions and what is realized or the achievements. The processes activated in class (cognitive, motivational, interpersonal, ...) are influenced by various factors, thus making outcomes highly unpredictable. This does
not mean that we give up and accept that teaching cannot be planned and organized and made (more) effective. This complexity of the teaching-learning situation presents us as individual teachers with a challenge - that of monitoring several aspects of the actual situation and going as far as possible to take account of the information obtained as a lesson progresses. A plan for teaching should not be followed like a recipe, but used as a starting point for further ‘situation-specific’ decisions.

This need for modification or adjustment of plans is what our earlier discussion of flexible planning points to. What learners in a given class will actually do (or be prepared to try to do seriously) - and this is their contribution to the lesson - cannot be controlled, or even predicted accurately when planning in advance. Hence the teacher must keep getting ‘up to date’ information (especially about the learner involvement and progress) and ‘fine-tune’ her planned inputs accordingly.

Monitoring is the means of obtaining feedback on an ongoing basis so that teaching can be made sensitive or responsive to the immediate situation in the class. We have already seen that a predisposition to monitor (informally) is present in teachers.

Monitoring needs to be carried out in a more conscious and systematic manner if it has to help with ‘improving’ instruction. Monitoring of instruction can, of course, be done by others (outsiders) as well. This has advantages and disadvantages. Here our focus is on self-monitoring. This process as noted above, helps immediately in the (more) effective handling of given lessons. In the long term, it plays a major role in enhancing the teacher’s professional skills. The rationale for self-monitoring can be summed up as shown below.

i) A teacher who has an awareness of teaching and its different components is better prepared to make appropriate judgements and decisions in teaching.

ii) Critical reflection can trigger a deeper understanding of teaching. Critical reflection, as we saw earlier, involves examining our own experiences as a basis for decision-making and self-development. It involves asking questions about how and why things are the way they are, the value systems they represent, alternatives available, etc.

iii) Much can be learned about teaching through self-inquiry. Very often class visits by outsiders are not feedback-oriented but are judgement-oriented. Moreover, rather than depending on external sources for information, the approach that seems to have a lot of potential for self-development is one where teachers monitor and collect information about their teaching either individually or through collaborating with a colleague and making decisions about what alternatives to adopt. Lawrence Stenhouse, a well-known expert in curriculum-research, is of the opinion that all well-founded curriculum research and development, whether the work of an individual teacher, of a school, of a group working in a teachers’ centre or of a group working within the coordinating framework of a national project, is based on the study of classrooms. It thus rests on the work of teachers. He further adds: ‘It is not enough that teachers’ work should be studied: they need to study it themselves’.

iv) Another related concept to self-monitoring is the view that experience by itself is insufficient as a basis for professional growth. We know that for many experienced teachers, many classroom routines and strategies are applied almost automatically and do not involve a great deal of conscious thought and reflection. Experience is the starting point, but for the experience to play a productive role, it is necessary to examine such experience systematically. For this, systematic procedures are needed. A more detailed discussion of these points is available in Richards and Lockhart (1994).
Self monitoring then is ‘illuminative’ because it involves raising the consciousness of teachers as to what is actually happening in the classroom as opposed to what is supposed to happen. It is also formative in purpose since the information we get about the process and product of teaching-learning can be immediately fed back to alter or improve our own class. Therefore it involves descriptions of what happened, and why and how this self-awareness helps in developing deeper insights into the complexities of a classroom. Therefore monitoring plays a major role in a teacher’s self-development.

Monitoring therefore involves systematic observation and explanation of classroom processes.

Task: If you are already a teacher, can you identify changes, however small, you have made to your teaching? Why did you make these changes? How did these changes come about?

Check Your Progress 1

Notes: a) Write your answers in the space given below:

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the Unit.

1) What would be two examples of changes in a plan that a teacher can make fairly smoothly during a lesson, as a result of the feedback received through monitoring?

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2) What is the basic reason for the gap between intentions and outcomes that seems a characteristic of teaching?

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5.4 HOW CAN WE MONITOR OUR OWN CLASS?

Having examined the need to monitor our own classrooms, we shall discuss in this section: what aspects of teaching-learning should we monitor and how can we monitor them.

To recapitulate very briefly what we have discussed earlier: self-monitoring is simply the practice of teachers themselves observing and reflecting on what takes place in class with a view to bringing about desirable changes in teaching and learning. What does teaching-learning consist of? No matter what kind of class it is, it seems to have certain factors that are common.
Task: What does a typical class involve? List some aspects that come to your mind from your experience. Some are mentioned to start you off.
- Selecting activities/tasks/exercises
- Presenting learning activities
- Setting up a group or pair-work task
- Giving instructions for a task/exercise
- Teacher explaining, clarifying, discussing
- Learners responding to teachers
- Learners responding to other learners ...(continue ......)

The list of factors is likely to include factors that relate to (i) different stages of teaching-learning, (ii) the main participants in the class i.e. teacher and students, and what they bring to a class by way of their beliefs, attitudes, expectations, assumptions about teaching-learning and (iii) the physical features of the classroom.

You would have realised while doing this task that each of these factors overlaps to quite an extent with other factors. This does not matter. This in fact means that a lesson is a complex combination of different factors and is therefore holistic. Very often it is quite difficult and sometimes impossible to isolate factors and examine them individually. This does not mean that we cannot look closely at a few of the aspects at a time. What we would like to examine actually depends on what stage we are in at a given time. We might also want to look at the same phenomenon from different perspectives i.e. from our own perspective (that of the teacher’s), from the perspective of students, and so on.

We will now discuss how we can monitor our own class systematically and in a principled way. In talking about it, we will try and cover as many aspects of a class as possible. For example teachers’ and students’ beliefs about language, and language learning that affect the actual learning in the classroom, the roles of teacher and students, classroom interaction which is a major factor in language learning, the nature of language learning tasks - including tasks used for assessment and so on. We may not, as we saw earlier, deal with these in this order or even separately. There are overlaps among the different aspects and therefore there would be overlaps in the way we monitor them.

We can collect information about the different aspects of teaching and learning using a variety of different procedures. These procedures incorporate a formative element by allowing us to get continuous, on-going feedback about the class, about the different aspects of ELT curriculum in process. They seek to provide the teacher with insights into what actually happens when teaching and learning is taking place.

The main procedures suggested in the unit are diaries (also referred to as journals and field-notes), observation, checklists and inventories, and self-assessment forms.

5.4.1 What are your beliefs about teaching language?

a) Let us first look at our own beliefs and attitudes which influence the way we behave in the classroom. Whether you are presently a teacher or not, as a student you would have seen different kinds of teachers, for example, teachers with different styles.
Teachers’ style is inevitably influenced by their attitudes and beliefs; for example, the nature and role of knowledge, in the case of language learning, their view of language.

**Task**: The beliefs and attitudes of the teacher are realised in classroom action. Are you a *transmission* teacher or an *interpretation* teacher? Why? Can you think of one or two specific instances from your class which substantiate your answer? Which aspects would you like to analyse further?

b) You can analyse your own beliefs about teaching with the help of a checklist suggested below. Select 5 statements that most closely reflect your beliefs about how English is learnt and how it should be taught.

1. Language is a set of grammatical structures and words which are to be taught systematically in class.
2. Language is meaningful communication and is learned by practice in informal situations.
3. When students learning English as L2 make errors, these errors should be corrected immediately and later explained through examples.
4. When students learning English (L2) make errors, it is best to ignore them as long as we know what they are saying.
5. Students learning English (L2) usually need to master some of the basic listening and speaking skills before they can begin to read and write.
6. It is important to repeat and practise a lot for learning a language.
7. The most important part of learning a second / foreign language is learning the grammar.
8. It is easier for children than adults to learn English as a second language.
9. It is not necessary to actually teach students how to speak English. They usually begin speaking on their own.
10. Everyone can learn English.

From the statements you have selected, can you state what according to you is language learning and teaching? Do you wish to analyse it further?

**5.4.2 What are learners’ beliefs and attitudes about language learning?**

Learners, too, bring to learning their own beliefs, goals and attitudes which influence how they learn. We know that learning is the goal of teaching, but learning is not the mirror image of teaching. We may want to know what assumptions and expectations learners bring to classrooms.

You could draw up an inventory


*Reflective teaching in second language* as shown below and give it to your students for their opinion. Find out from students to what extent they agree with each of these statements:

1. English is much more difficult than other languages.
2. English is the most important language in the world.
3. You need to know a lot of words if you want to know English.
4. We need to practise every day to improve our English.
5. Teachers should explain grammar rules in the class.
6. It is enough if the teacher gives grammar exercise(s) as homework.
7. It is important to speak English very well.
8. It is better if the teacher corrects all our mistakes.
9. I like group work because when I make mistakes my friends don’t correct me.
10. It’s not correct to ask the teacher when you have a doubt.
11. I know the rule but I forget it when I speak.

(You could modify this list depending on what aspects you would like information on.)

You could speculate about the kinds of learners who will agree/disagree with the above statements. Is it likely that statements 3, 4, 5, 8, 10 are chosen by the same learners? Why? Are any of the characteristics reflected by the statements at odds with your beliefs? Would you like to investigate it further?

5.4.3 How did tasks/exercises work in class?

You might be interested in how well the tasks/exercises/activities you set up measured up to the criteria you had in mind. You could list a set of criteria as suggested below and observe and record your views as the class progresses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>At the end of the class Yes/No</th>
<th>At the end of 20 minutes Yes/No</th>
<th>The Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Were based on real-life needs.</td>
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<td>2. Provided opportunity for skill-practice.</td>
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<td>3. Provided for different levels of learners.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>4. Allowed interaction among learners.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>5. Promoted information sharing.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>6. Encouraged learners to reflect critically.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7. Encouraged learners to evaluate themselves.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8. Were interesting/informative/challenging.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Which tasks/aspects of tasks would need to be modified? Why?

5.4.4 Classroom Observation

a) If on the other hand you would like to monitor your class as a whole, you could use this observation schedule:

Observation Schedule [Make observations after 20 and 40 minutes]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>The Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. All instructions were clear.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. The class understood what was wanted at all times.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Every student was involved at some point.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Students were interested in the lesson.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. The teacher made sure all students understood.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. Materials and learning activities were appropriate.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7. Class atmosphere was positive</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8. The pacing of the lesson was appropriate.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9. There was enough variety in the lesson.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10. There was the right amount of teacher talk.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11. Error correction and feedback were appropriate.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>12. There was genuine communication.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13. Group work was well organized.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14. Explanation of points of language were clear.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

At the end of the class you could note down any comments you may have about each of these statements and the class as a whole. What did you learn from this exercise?

This exercise is based entirely on your own retrospective observation. Another exercise you could try is to record your class on an audio-tape recorder. Play it at the end of the class and then make your comments.

b) You could also write a diary on the following lines to keep a record of how things were planned and implemented in class. Before the lesson, think about your plan and ask yourself the questions in the First set. After the lesson, ask yourself the questions in the Second set. At the end, answer the questions in the Third set.

**First set - Before the lesson**

1. Is the lesson that you have planned interesting?
2. Does it provide opportunities for students to be actively involved?
3. What classroom arrangement will you use? What materials do you need?
4. Which skills will you focus on in the class?
5. What might the students learn? Write the aim of your lesson.
6. Are the instructions clear?
7. What provision have you made for students who finish slowly/quickly?
Second set - After the lesson

1. What evidence was there that (a) the students were interested (b) the lesson was smoothly/badly organized?
2. Which learners were not involved? Why?
3. Write down some example of the language that the students used. Was it meaningful or meaningless?
4. What will you do next to follow up the lesson?
5. Which of your aims were achieved? Were other things achieved instead?
6. When did the students give their own ideas? Did you accept their ideas? Did they have a fair share of time to talk or did you dominate the class?

Third set

1. What have I learnt?
2. How would I like to improve/change/develop my teaching in the future?

5.4.5 How do students learn in Class?

a) When you need to monitor student learning, it could be done by observing them in class - working in groups or pairs or individually. Since observing the whole class may not be very easy, you might want to focus on a few students on a given day or on one group/pair on a given task. The following checklist might help.

Checklist for Informal Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student’s names</th>
<th>Dimensions of Student Behaviour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use these letters to code performance:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F = frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O = occasionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R = rarely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Substantiates own views</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Argues logically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Shows creativity/originality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Responds to other views/ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Asks relevant questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Attempts to answer questions when asked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Obstructs discussion (monopolises, is discourteous/disruptive, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Uses L1 (mother tongue)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) If on the other hand you want students to monitor themselves and give you their views on it, you could give them a self-evaluation form as suggested below. This could be repeated every fortnight or month to see any progress in their learning indicated by their entries.

Checklist for Self-Evaluation of Learners

1. How much time outside class have you spent Speaking English? ___________________________
2. Who have you spoken to this week in English? (not including your teacher) Do you feel your conversations were generally successful?
   Yes/No  Why?

3. What films/TV programmes/radio programmes have you seen/listened to this week?
   What did you think of it?
   Did it help you with your English?
   If yes, how?
   If no, why not?

4. Have you written anything in English this week? If yes, what?

5. Write down 10 new words in English that you have learnt this week.

6. Do you feel confident using these words when you speak/write?

7. Where did you learn them?
   Other context (please specify)

8. What progress do you feel you have made in English this week?
   a lot  quite a lot  a little  not at all
   speaking ....
   listening ..... 
   reading ...... 
   writing ......

9. What are you going to work on/try to improve next week?
   speaking ........
   listening .......
   reading ........
   writing .......
   How are you going to do this?

10. Now rate your progress for this week on your own personal scale from 1-11
    (1 = lowest    11=highest)  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10  11

Check Your Progress 3

1) How can monitoring be of help in the professional growth even of teachers who are already quite experienced?

.............
2. What are some of the aspects of the teaching-learning situation that a teacher should be able to monitor without much difficulty?

5.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have looked at the general notion of monitoring, or observing events (especially our own actions) as they are occurring. We have seen that teaching is an activity that is usually monitored informally by teachers. The principle of flexibly planning instruction so that it can be made responsive to the actual teaching-learning situation indicates that monitoring has an important role to play. It helps the teacher with the ‘final’ stages of implementing a curriculum in a particular class. The practice of monitoring in the long run helps to make the teacher into a reflective practitioner - one who is not only doing a technical job but also learning from experience. We have also noted some of the aspects of the teaching situation that can be monitored by the teacher, and looked at the procedures and instruments that a teacher can fairly conveniently use. (A number of tasks for you to attempt - assuming the role of a teacher usually - have also been suggested. These were meant primarily as exercises to sensitize you and help you to relate concepts introduced here to your experience. They are not ‘text-based questions’ with correct answers.)

5.6 ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

1. Activities that are routine and habitual are carried on more or less automatically or ‘unconsciously’.
   Examples:
   i) washing ones hands and drying them with a towel.
   ii) Moving past rows of desks handing out sheets or booklets.

   Activities that are not well practiced or are new tasks in new situations call for concentration and attention,
   Examples: i) Carrying a tray with tea cups filled to the brim.
   ii) Going from desk to desk in an examination hall checking hall tickets, seat numbers, etc.

2) In routine activities while things are proceeding normally attention remains minimal, but as something unexpected happens (something goes wrong) full attention is given to the activity.

Check Your Progress 2

1) (i) A detailed explanation of some point with various examples can be cut short if there is a clear indication that most students have understood.
(ii) An idea that is clearly of great interest to students comes up during a lesson, and the teacher decides to take up a discussion or task related to it immediately (and not a day or two later as in her plan).

2) The teacher’s plan and intentions are necessarily based on assumptions about the learners. Even if she knows them well, it is impossible to predict how they (30 or 40 of them) will react during a particular lesson on a particular day. They will invariably ‘push’ some aspect of the lesson in some unforeseen direction or the other.

Check Your Progress 3

1) As a teacher gains experience on the job, more and more of her teacher behaviour tends to become routine and habitual. One learns from experience by reflecting on it, and hence the value of monitoring for the experienced teacher. It can help her teaching (probably quite good by general standards) to become even more effective for more of her diverse learners.

2) - the teacher’s beliefs and assumptions
    - the learners’ attitudes and expectations
    - the difficulty and manageability of certain new task types
    - the quantity and quality of interaction among the members of one or more of the groups set up in class.
    - the level of satisfaction or sense of progress that students themselves feel.